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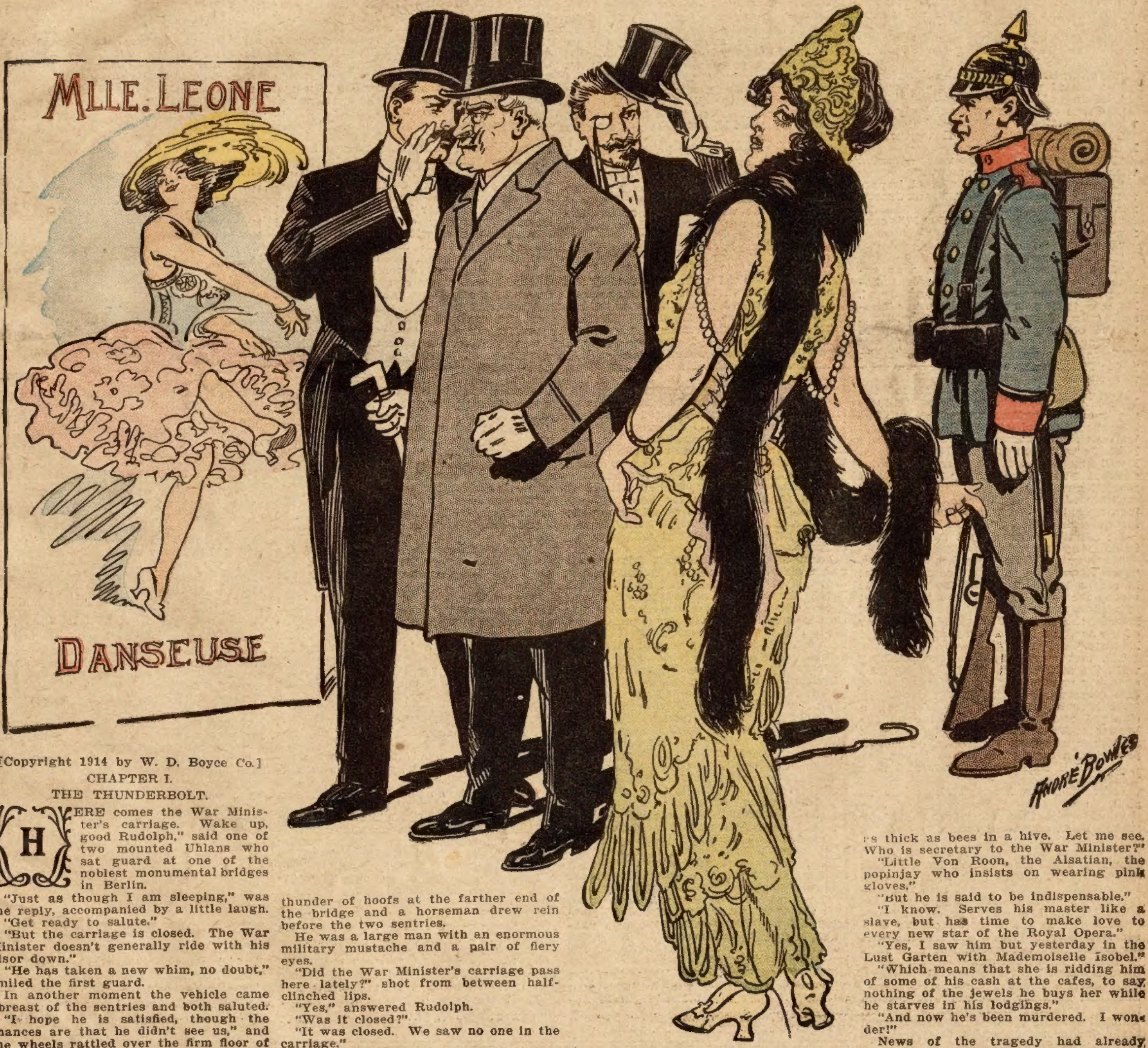
Isobel, the Czar's Spy

Or, EMPIRES AT STAKE

By T. C. Harbaugh



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CHAPTER I.

THE THUNDERBOLT.

"HERE comes the War Minister's carriage. Wake up, good Rudolph," said one of two mounted Uhlans who sat guard at one of the noblest monumental bridges in Berlin.

"Just as though I am sleeping," was the reply, accompanied by a little laugh.

"Get ready to salute."

"But the carriage is closed. The War Minister doesn't generally ride with his visor down."

"He has taken a new whim, no doubt," smiled the first guard.

In another moment the vehicle came abreast of the sentries and both saluted.

"I hope he is satisfied, though the chances are that he didn't see us," and the wheels rattled over the firm floor of the structure and the carriage was soon out of sight.

"You pick up a good deal of news, Rudolph. What is the latest gossip of the cafes?"

"As though you don't frequent them yourself," was the reply; "I tire of this inaction. If the Austrian Minister who left but yesterday had only had some intrigue in his portfolio——"

"Who knows?" and the conversation lagged.

Meantime the carriage had passed on in direction of the royal palace.

Twenty minutes later there was the thunder of hoofs at the farther end of the bridge and a horseman drew rein before the two sentries.

He was a large man with an enormous military mustache and a pair of fiery eyes.

"Did the War Minister's carriage pass here lately?" shot from between half-clinched lips.

"Yes," answered Rudolph.

"Was it closed?"

"It was closed. We saw no one in the carriage."

The officer seemed to frown.

"What has happened?" ventured Barmax.

"Enough, God knows! The War Minister's secretary has been murdered!"

"No!" voiced the startled guards in unison.

"It is true. He was found dead in his seat when the carriage reached the gate of the royal palace."

"Impossible!"

"Everything is possible to the assassin."

"And you have caught him?"

"Would I be here if we had?" demanded the officer, and putting spurs to his horse he was off like a bolt from a Maxim gun.

"What think you of that?" said Rudolph to his brother guard. "The Minister's secretary killed in his carriage ——"

"How know you he was killed there?" was the interruption. "It may have happened elsewhere. Berlin is full of foreign spies——"

"It swarms with them, and just now when the Austrian agent has been here, no doubt on a secret mission, they are as thick as bees in a hive. Let me see. Who is secretary to the War Minister?"

"Little Von Roon, the Alsatian, the popinjay who insists on wearing pink gloves."

"But he is said to be indispensable."

"I know. Serves his master like a slave, but has time to make love to every new star of the Royal Opera."

"Yes, I saw him but yesterday in the Lust Garten with Mademoiselle Isobel."

"Which means that she is ridding him of some of his cash at the cafes, to say nothing of the jewels he buys her while he starves in his lodgings."

"And now he's been murdered. I wonder!"

News of the tragedy had already reached the war office by telephone.

Excitement had sprung to its topmost height and clerks and officials were talking in low whispers. The War Minister himself was pacing the floor in silence like a man struck by a bolt which had deprived him of speech.

At least he seemed to pull himself together. The clock over the mantel was striking twelve, midnight.

"Has the man come yet?" he asked.

At that moment the private guard at the door opened it and a man was pushed into the room. It was the driver of the War Minister's carriage.

The great functionary turned a pair of glowering eyes upon the cringing menial whose face wore the hue of Alpine snow.

"Help the wretch to a chair," he commanded. "We will learn something at least."

The poor fellow was placed in a chair and sat there gasping as though in his last agony.

The War Minister leaned slightly forward and fixed his eagle eyes upon the shivering wretch.

"Who rode with Von Roon?" he asked.

"No one, your excellency," stammered the man.

"Where did you stop?"

"I did not stop——"

The great man looked incredulous.

"But Von Roon was dead when you reached the palace?"

"Alas! yes, your excellency."

"You did not kill him?"

The man in the chair staggered to his feet and threw out both hands.

"I?" he cried from the depths of his tortured body. "I, Wilhelm Von Tuyl? Why should I kill the secretary, your good excellency?"

"Take him away," cried the War Minister, and he made a significant gesture to an officer, who promptly hustled the dazed man out of the room.

In less than five minutes the War Minister was closeted with a man who had a pair of keen eyes set in deep sockets fringed with a wealth of dark lashes.

He was the chief of the royal secret police.

"Tell me," said the head of the German War Department, "was anything found on the body?"

"Nothing but his personal belongings."

"No sealed packet?"

"Nothing of the sort."

The face of the listener suddenly went white.

The secret service official ventured a little.

"Permit me to ask if he was entrusted with any important documents."

"He carried one of the utmost importance. You are aware that Franz Josef's minister has been in Berlin?"

"It was my duty to know it," confessed the chief.

"Yes."

"He went away yesterday."

"You are right. Von Roon was entrusted with the final agreement between the Emperor and Franz Josef. He was taking it to the Emperor himself. That document is worth millions to the other powers and especially to the Czar."

There was no reply, as though the police functionary was prepared for anything.

"Your trail has begun," continued the War Minister a minute later. "This is the most important tragedy that has happened in Berlin since its foundation. Unless the lost document is found we are lost. It will arm the whole of Europe. I will say no more. Go!" and the chief without further ceremony was waved from the room.

The white-faced War Minister sank into a chair and for a moment covered his quivering face with his hands.

He seemed to have aged twenty years in as many minutes.

"I am ruined," fell from his ashen lips. "Von Roon dead, the agreement gone! It means war, war with the world. It means the mobilizing of ten million men; it means the onrush of the hordes of Russia, the might of England, the power of France, the battle array of the Triple Entente."

The last words were a heartbreaking wail, the soulful agony of a strong man suddenly crushed by the trip hammer of dire disaster.

At last he staggered to h's feet, a changed man. He was no longer the handsome War Minister, the man whom all Berlin admired, but a man of broken physique, a man of vanished hopes.

A footfall came to the door and then went away.

If the Minister heard it he made no sign.

"What will the Emperor think?" he groaned. "I could not send any one but Von Roon. He was to be trusted in everything. He was a woman-hater, therefore I see no woman's hand in this awful thing. Some one must have known his mission, must have got into the carriage somewhere with a fell purpose which was all too successfully accomplished. It is the mystery of the century. I might have retained the—the document till tomorrow, but the Emperor was impatient and——"

He checked himself and said no more. At that moment the clock struck one. The War Minister suddenly swept some papers from the table into a drawer, which he locked, and then disappeared through a secret entrance, tottering like a drunkard.

CHAPTER II.

THE BEAUTIFUL ALSATIAN.

IT was the night before the tragedy of the War Minister's carriage.

The streets, parks and boulevards of Berlin had the appearance of a festival. There was nothing to indicate the unrest that had for months prevailed in the German capital. The merrymakers did not know that great events were taking place, that a wind was beginning to blow from little Servia which, in a short time, was to become a hurricane of war and cause the earth to tremble to the tread of armed millions.

Beyond official circles the visit of the Austrian secret envoy was unknown. This distinguished diplomat had come and gone and plebeian Berlin was none the wiser.

The Royal Theater was crowded to the doors with people eager to hear the wonderful singing of "the beautiful Alsatian" who had taken the capital by storm and who had received the applause of the Emperor himself. Never before had such a bird of song trilled in the great house of amusement. She had come and captured the hearts of all, and, besides her singing, she had the asset of matchless beauty and grace which still further accentuated her conquest.

Her title of "Mademoiselle" had caused no rancor in German hearts, for was not Alsace a German province, won at the cannon's mouth, and did not the eagles of the empire float from every Alsatian fort?

Isobel had sung in every land. Her conquests in Russia had been as great as those in other lands; she had received presents from the Czar, and Italy had showered her with flowers.

Burke Lassiter, globe trotter, English and an athlete, strolled into the Stadt-Weimar.

He was handsome, one-and-thirty and had seen as much of the world as any man who has money to accomplish all his desires.

As he entered the beautiful foyer he received a beckoning from the head clerk which he answered by going at once to the desk.

"A message for you, sir," said that official, at the same time taking a sealed envelope from Lassiter's box. "It came but an hour ago."

"Thank you, sir," said the Englishman, moving away as he balanced the missive on his fingers.

Retiring to one corner he dropped into a chair and opened the envelope with the blade of his knife.

There was not much to read for his pains.

But one line was scrawled across the scented page and Lassiter devoured it at once:

"Come to me at 37 after the opera. ISOBEL."

"Lassiter looked up as he folded the pink sheet and thrust it into his pocket.

It was not every one who could receive such a missive from the Alsatian song-bird. Counts, princes and generals had sought such an invitation in vain. Some had got as near Isobel as the wheels of her limousine but no further. She was the beautiful mystery of the day.

A smile gathered at Lassiter's lips as he lighted a cigar and lolled back into the soft depths of the chair.

There was an expression of pleasure in his dark eyes and he drew the invitation from his pocket and read it again.

He had plenty of time on his hands.

He need not seek Isobel till after twelve, for she was in the habit of taking a spin through the streets after the opera, a strange delight of hers, for she called herself a night owl which hunts only after dark.

Lassiter looked through his smoke and took observations of the diversified crowd that came and went in the great hotel. These were of every nation and every clime, from the bearded Russian to the spick-and-span Frenchman, and from the touring American to the turbaned Turk—the most cosmopolitan assemblage in all the world.

Presently there crossed Lassiter's line of vision a little man whose thin face and dazzling eyes held his gaze for more than a passing moment.

He had seen this personage before, had met him in another capital of Europe, and indeed so often that he sometimes thought he was dogging his movements.

Strouse was an Austrian. Lassiter had seen him last at Monaco, where the long, wolfish fingers had cast heaps of gold on the croupier's table, careless whether he won or lost. When he lost more gold was produced, and when he won he simply smiled and bowed to the croupier. A wonderful man was Strouse, a man who spoke half a dozen languages and who knew all the drinks in Europe.

The Austrian seemed to have dropped into the hotel from force of habit. Lassiter did not know where he was putting up and when he wondered where, he concluded that it was none of his business.

His eyes followed the little Austrian till he passed into the billiard-room without having taken the slightest notice of him.

Presently Strouse emerged and left the hotel. Lassiter, glancing through the plate-glass window, saw him enter a motor which evidently had been waiting for him, and the next moment he was whisked away.

"I'd like to know where that Austrian devil hides," thought the Englishman. "He's a perfect will-o'-the-wisp, and for the last three months has been crossing my trail wherever I go. Some day perhaps——"

He did not conclude his mental sentence; perhaps he would only get deeper into the tangle, and he gave up in despair.

At last he rose and decided to answer Isobel's message in person. He had something to say to the Alsatian, something which had been on his mind for some time and which was for no ears but hers.

He walked from the hotel and hailed a taxi. Springing inside he gave Isobel's address and was bowling over the beautiful streets of Berlin.

If he had looked back, and he could easily have done so, he would have seen a small limousine in his wake. It turned when he did, slowed up wnen his car slacked speed and raced when it let itself loose.

Lassiter consulted his watch as the taxi drew up in front of Number 37.

He was on time and hoped that Isobel had finished her midnight spin.

"Wait—around the corner," he said as he mounted the steps of the elegant pension.

In another moment he was inside.

Isobel inhabited two sumptuous rooms. A delicate lemon scent always pervaded them, and when near the singer Lassiter was conscious of another perfume which had been manufactured for the Alsatian by the best perfumer on the continent.

A little cry greeted Lassiter as he opened a door.

In the soft light that pervaded the elegant parlor stood the beauty of the opera, dazzling in her wonderful freshness, and clad in a rich gown which revealed the ravishing outlines of her perfect figure.

She held out her beautiful hands and Lassiter, bending over them, touched the pink fingers with his lips. He noticed with a thrill that Isobel did not withdraw her hand.

"I am glad you've come," said she in English, but with a soft accent. "I haven't been in long, therefore you have not wearied me with waiting."

"I am glad of that", responded Lassiter. "I feared——"

"Oh, you men are fearing something all the time," interposed Isobel with a little laugh which brought into view her perfect teeth. "I have had my spin. Berlin seems sleepless tonight. Unless I am mistaken they will need sleep ere long."

"I don't know, said Lassiter. "The night is perfect and they must have their airing."

She had drawn him to a chair and he was looking into the bewitching orbs of the beautiful Alsatian.

"Whom have you seen tonight?" she suddenly asked. "Any one?"

"Strouse," answered Lassiter sententiously.

"That little sleuth hound?" smiled the star. "Where was he?" and then before the Englishman could reply she went on:

"I saw him leave his box at the close of the second act. I suppose the opera was too dull for him."

"Or he wanted to hunt me up to let me know that he is still serving his master."

They laughed together.

"You know—of course you do——" said Isobel suddenly becoming serious, "that the envoy has departed."

"Methuen? Yes. Though he went off without ceremony, his flitting did not escape me."

"I thought it would not," was the response. "You know why he came to Berlin?"

"From what you have already told me, I have guessed."

"He came to see the Minister of State, or the Prime Minister, as you Englishmen would say. He brought with him an important document. Upon that document rests the fate of Europe."

Lassiter did not affect surprise. He was not surprised by anything that fell from Isobel's tongue.

"It's a desperate venture," she went on, dropping her rich voice a bar. "It must not fail."

"I know."

"Of course you do, Burke," she cried, dropping into a familiarity which pleased Lassiter. "We want that document."

There was startling resolution in her tones. Her eyes seemed to glow with new light and the little hand clinched over the crimson arm of her chair. "The Czar wants it."

"Yes, and what Nicholas wants he must have," said Lassiter.

"That is it!" exclaimed the Alsatian. "Nothing is too good for Russia. Monsieur, the Prime Minister, is just now out of the city. The War Minister for the present has taken over state affairs and the document is in his possession."

"And he will guard it," Lassiter said. "What of Von Roon?"

"Oh, the poor fool is putty. I have him in my hand," and Isobel leaned back in her chair and laughed.

CHAPTER III.

A FATAL LURE.

LASSITER and Mademoiselle Isobel were both "in the same boat," so to speak.

The brilliant opera star was the Czar's spy and a woman who had already been tested in that dangerous capacity. Her nerve was marvelous, her cleverness beyond description, and her beauty had aided her many times in her chosen vocation.

Lassiter had been drawn to her by her beauty and vocal accomplishments. He had followed her from capital to capital, now and then suspecting her double employment, and when she confessed that she was in Russia's service he abated none of his admiration. In truth her confession only deepened his passion.

He knew that it was common report that Isobel had played many a man to his ruin, that she was a Lorelei who sang but to deceive, but he could not believe that she was to be thus to him. At times he believed that his passion was returned, for she was but a woman, though of lofty mind; and he had gone on loving her even after he had discovered that she was the Czar's spy, and unconsciously had been drawn into the vortex until they were in the same perilous craft.

When he left her abode that night it was with feelings impossible to describe.

Isobel had declared that the document which Austria's diplomat had brought to Berlin must find its way into the hands of the Czar.

Nicholas must know what it contained. It was worth more than millions to Russia. The tension which was upon every European court was liable to snap at any time and Russia must be forewarned. A spark might ignite the powder and set a continent aflame. Already Austria was casting covetous eyes toward Servia, and Russia longed for the turban of the Turk.

It was likely that the first advances toward war would come from Austria, whose aged emperor was still grasping while at the brink of the grave and it did not take the eyes of a diplomat to see that she would ally herself with her northern neighbor, whose immense legions were ready to open the game of Mars.

Lassiter went back to his rooms at the Stadt-Weimar with a promise to meet Isobel again the following night after the opera.

"I will come straight to my chambers," Isobel had said on parting. "I will not take my usual spin. This document which now rests in the War Minister's safe is too important for pleasure. It must get into our hands."

The words thrilled Lassiter. Was there ever such a woman?

When he entered the hotel he looked about for Strouse the Austrian. He was not to be seen. The little spy evidently was upon some trail for his royal master, and the Englishman breathed freer when he noted his absence.

"You have been called up, sir," said the head clerk upon catching sight of Lassiter, who was retiring to the smoking room for a quiet bout with his pipe.

"Who has called me?" he asked.

The clerk looked at a little memorandum before him.

"Number 1221, I believe," he answered. "You were to call the party up."

Lassiter went directly to the telephone.

"Give me 1221, please," said he in German.

In a moment there was a tinkling response and he put the receiver to his lips.

"Is this 1221?"

"It is," said a voice in not very distinct tones.

They were strange to Lassiter.

"Who is talking?" he asked.

"I am at 40 Behrenstrasse, next door to the Dresdner Bank."

"But who are you?"

"You don't seem to recognize my voice." There was a chuckle at the end of the sentence. "I am Vogeler."

"Oh," said Lassiter. "I recognize you now. Where have you been?"

"I came in but yesterday. Have been galloping over Switzerland. Can you come?"

"When?"

"Now."

"It's pretty late, isn't it?"

"Not for night owls like ourselves."

"I'll come at once," and Lassiter hung up the receiver.

He proceeded to his room and took from a drawer an automatic, hardly knowing why, though his continental experiences had told him to be prepared for any emergency; and after changing

Be sure and read *"Isobel, the Czar's Spy; or, An Empire At Stake,"* in this issue. It tells some interesting things leading to the present European war. Next week we will introduce you to *"Pansy Wayne" and her strange honeymoon.* This will be followed by a fascinating story, entitled, *"The Death Ring; or, War-Mad Europe,"* and a splendid new boys' story. Look out for some nice things in the Ledger Christmas issue. As a story paper the Ledger has them all beaten. Keep taking it and we will convince you.

his outer coat, slipped from the hotel and into a taxi.

He had known Vogeler, a half-Englishman, for some time; they had climbed Mount Blanc together, and on another occasion had done Venice and its numerous lagoons.

Speculating upon Vogeler's sudden appearance in Berlin, Lassiter was whisked away and took no notice of the streets with their flickering lights.

Not until he had turned into the Behrenstrasse did he think of the thing in his pocket. It was still there ready for aggression or defense, and he knew how to use it. Still, he smiled when he thought that he should recur to it when he was going to see such a harmless person as Vogeler.

The silent bank rose before him and then the taxi drew up to the curb a few steps away. Lassiter alighted and gave directions for the taxi to wait.

Into the great building he plunged and almost collided with a weazen-faced janitor, who nodded kindly to him.

"Second floor, first door to the right," said the old man and vanished.

The lift had stopped running for the night and Lassiter mounted the stair.

There was a light over the transom of the designated door and Lassiter went straight to it. He turned the heavy knob and entered.

At first he saw no one in the room and an ejaculation was forming on his lips when a man started toward him.

"Hands up!" cried a stern voice which sank into Lassiter's heart like a knell of doom. "Don't fit yourself for the morgue by reaching for a weapon. You see we have you at a disadvantage."

There was no doubting the truth of this declaration, for a revolver was looking Lassiter squarely in the face. Behind it was a man of giant proportions, a man with a heavy mustache and a pair of dangerous eyes.

Lassiter was stunned and but for the revolver he would have whipped out the automatic and fought like a cornered lion.

"Take yon chair!" continued the man. "We want to have a little conversation."

The hand that held the weapon did not swerve a hair.

Lassiter moved over to the chair and dropped into it, never for a moment removing his eyes from his adversary.

"You came to us promptly," continued the unknown. "I thought the Vogeler bait would catch you."

The Englishman shrugged his shoulders and frowned.

"Don't you think you've been playing this game long enough, Mr. Lassiter?" resumed the stranger. "Walking on the crust of a volcano isn't the safest pedestrianism in the world. Do you know when the next train departs for Warsaw?"

Lassiter bit his lips at the man's coolness. He was dealing with no ordinary person, that was evident. What, be driven out of Berlin and leave Isobel at the mercy of a cabal of desperate men who were undoubtedly in the pay of a kingdom? What would happen to the beautiful Alsatian? He shuddered when he thought of her peril. The match was nearing the powder magazines of Europe. The hand of the Austrian Emperor held it. He knew this for he had not been idle.

"You had a nice visit tonight?" suddenly resumed the man with the revolver.

"What is that to you?"

"It is more than you think," was the reply. "You are no longer needed in Berlin, Mr. Lassiter."

"But I——"

"You need not pack for a man of your ilk has his luggage always packed. It awaits you below."

"What?"

"We have but twenty minutes to catch the Warsaw Express. Tickets will be provided."

Lassiter was stunned.

"I do not understand this," he stammered when he caught second wind. "I am not going to Warsaw——"

"You have no choice in the matter, my dear man," was the interruption. "Here, Martz."

At that moment a side door was flung open and a man nearly as gigantic as Lassiter's confronter stepped forward.

"Take Mr. Lassiter to the limousine," commanded the unknown. "If he resists, convey him to the gates of the morgue. I guess he understands."

The breathless Briton rose to his feet. A second revolver was thrust against his head, and the following moment he was going down the staircase in front of the silent Martz.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MOTH AND THE FLAME.

ON the morning after her last interview with Lassiter, Mademoiselle Isobel opened her eyes in her luxurious bedroom and rang for her maid.

She had slept late and consequently felt refreshed for the work of the day which she had decided should witness the crowning triumph of her life.

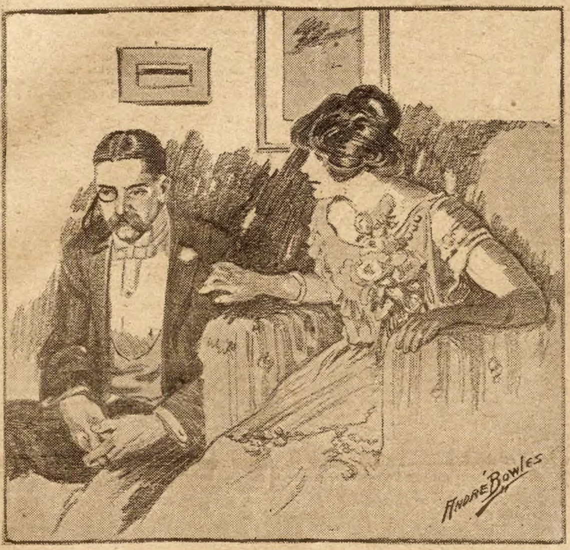
It was the day of the tragedy of the War Minister's carriage, but there was no premonition of that exciting event to cast a shadow over the fair Alsatian's future.

She had informed Lassiter that Von Roon had become putty in her hands. She had dallied with the little secretary for a purpose, had let him raise her hand to his lips and had looked divinely into his face with her wonderful eyes, filling him with the delightful thought that she had chosen him above all her admirers.

He was to come to her that day and she confidently expected that the gigantic prize upon which she had staked everything was to be won.

Isobel knew of the visit of the Austrian diplomat. She knew that the most precious of all documents reposed in the War Minister's safe, and it was upon the obtaining of it that she had set her heart.

But would Von Roon go thus far? Could she, by her subtle blandishments, cajole him into a treason the like of which no European court had ever known? After all the man might not be "putty" in the woman's hands.



"Strouse," answered Lassiter.

So while Marka, the maid, went on dexterously with her toilette, Isobel looked out upon the smiling day. She saw the full-leaved trees in the street below and caught a glimpse of the blooms in the Lust Garten. Coming victory filled her with contentment. There was to be no matinee that day and she could give it over to the final entanglement of Von Roon. She enjoyed her gruel in the quietude of her boudoir. Once or twice she thought of Lassiter and a new light leaped up in her deep, dark eyes. Fate was kindly holding a curtain before her. She knew naught of the Englishman's trapping, and while she smiled and looked out of the window she exclaimed:

"Ah, we shall outwit you, Strouse, and send you back to your imperial master crestfallen and empty-handed."

The hour had come and the woman was ready.

At a certain hour a limousine halted in front of the Alsatian's abode and a little man wearing a boutonniere alighted. It was Rupert Von Roon.

The moth had come to the flame.

The attache of the war office ran lightly up the steps and rather excitedly rapped at Isobel's door. A clear voice bade him enter and the next moment he stood in the presence of the beautiful Alsatian.

"You are very good to come to me," smiled Isobel, as she rose to greet him with extended hand, which he took and pressed to his lips.

"I could not remain away from you," was the reply as, with bewitching grace, the star led him to a seat.

Von Roon at forty was rather handsome. He had not thrown all his youth away in diplomatic slavery. He had reached an important position, for did he not know many great state secrets, any one of which was worth millions to the crowned heads of Europe?

For some time Isobel talked of things that were far from the one subject she was burning to discuss. She led up to it gradually with the secretary's gaze riveted upon her.

"Berlin," said Isobel at last, "has had a distinguished visitor."

Von Roon assented with a nod.

"He has gone back to Vienna, I understand," she continued. "No doubt he was charged with some wonderful secret."

"You may be sure he did not come to Berlin for mere pleasure," replied the little man.

"No, when kings have the chessboard between them, there are moves of importance. But you will have some wine, my dear Rupert?"

Von Roon's face glowed. She had called him Rupert and he believed she had never gone so far with other men.

Isobel rang for Marka who brought in champagne, and Isobel filled the goblets with her own white hand.

"Here's to our friendship," she exclaimed, touching brim to brim as she glowed upon the human moth. "You should not slave yourself away at the desk, mon chere."

She spoke French, which Von Roon thoroughly understood.

"It is true that one drops into a rut from which it is difficult to extricate one's self," he answered. "I suppose I was born to diplomatic drudgery."

"A man of your attainments?" cried Isobel. "Impossible! You miss the delights of love at the desk. You wear yourself out far from the flowery fields of dalliance. We can live but once, mon ami. Why, then, search the desert in preference to the rose garden?"

The heart of the infatuated man was beating a merry tattoo in his bosom.

"I have wondered what these emperors can have to say to each other that one must send his titled servant to the other. Do you know, my dear Rupert, that I would like to have a peep at one of these secret compacts."

"What, at a real state secret?" exclaimed Von Roon.

"Why not? It is a woman's curiosity, but we are never permitted to look behind the scenes. There is a fascination in diplomacy, something, that stirs the blood, especially when such rulers as those of Germany and Austria are whispering secrets which are hidden beneath waxen seals."

She was now bending her soul to the one great purpose. Their eyes met and Von Roon's face was flushed with joy.

"I don't know what I would give if I could get a little peep at the agreement between the emperors," Isobel proceeded. "But I suppose that pleasure is not for poor me, and I shall have to go back to the stage with the longing still in my heart."

Von Roon was silent.

"I envy you the knowledge of this state secret," she resumed after a spell. "To be so near it must be real joy. You are an envied mortal, Rupert."

Her hand had gradually moved so close to Von Roon's that he could not resist the impulse to take it and press it to his lips.

"I think a look at the document would reward me for all my toiling for the humble position I hold. I am a mere singer, you know, but I long to leave the stage and somewhere, with the man I love, to pass the gates of paradise and be supremely happy."

It was the happiest moment in Von Roon's life.

"I don't think it would be so difficult after all," he said under the witchery of her spell.

"Come, do not raise me to the heights of pleasure only to dash me into the slough of despond," she sighed. "It is impossible for me to get nearer to my burning desire than I am at this moment."

"I say it might be possible," he assured her. "The document is in the war office and under my eye most of the time. It may not be as important as you think."

"But a sight of it would gratify my curiosity. The seals——"

"There are seals and seals," interrupted Von Roon. "I have seen them broken and others substituted so well that the deception was never suspected by experts."

"You startle me."

"It is quite true—my dear. On one occasion we broke the seal of a state secret and I was called upon to substitute another, for which I received the Emperor's thanks."

"Which must have gratified you," said Isobel.

"My dear lady," continued Von Roon, bending towards her, "It would be cruelty not to gratify your ambition. If you will permit me, the peep at the document shall be yours."

There was no change in the Alsatian's countenance.

She had won!

"But what if the trick should be discovered?" she exclaimed, pretending alarm.

"There need be no discovery," was the prompt reply. "You shall name the hour when your dearest wish shall be gratified."

"When I shall be the happiest woman in all the world!" and the wonderful eyes seemed to look love into Von Roon's fluttering heart. "If this joy is really to be mine, Rupert, let it be tomorrow night at ten and here."

"It shall be so."

Twenty minutes later Von Roon stood in the middle of the room, holding Isobel's hands in his.

The Czar's spy had turned the trick.

The beautiful Alsatian leaned towards him and the next moment Von Roon had taken her in his arms and imprinted a kiss upon her luscious lips.

She heard him go down the stair with beating heart; she ran to the window and saw the green limousine dash away.

"At last!" she cried, pressing her hands to her heaving bosom. "The moth came to the candle. I have won for Russia! I may have changed the map of Europe!" And she dropped into the chair and poured out another glass of champagne.

Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of this remarkable story. You will miss a great treat if you do not read it to the end. We will give you constantly the very best stories of entertainment that money will buy, so send in your subscription and take the Ledger regularly, if you are not doing so. You will not regret it.

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A Dry Sermon.

One hot Sunday morning, as the worshipers from a little country church were slowly wending their way toward their homes, a burly old farmer stood beside his yard gate nodding his head and wishing a cheerful "good day" to passers-by.

At last his greetings became less frequent, and, telling himself that nearly every one must have passed, he was about to turn away when he descried the well-known form of the pastor coming down the road.

"Very warm day, farmer," commented the clergyman, as he drew nearer.

"Mortal hot, indeed," was the hearty response. "Are you too proud to step inside a minute and taste a good glass of sweet cider, parson?"

"I am not too proud, of course," returned the clergyman amusedly; "but I will not accept your kind offer, all the same, thank you; for, to tell you the truth, it is close upon my dinner hour, and I must go straight home."

"Then you are not thirsty?"

"No, thanks."

"Look here, parson," exclaimed the farmer; "we don't want to have no misunderstanding for want of a few words of explanation, and I should like you to know that I shouldn't have made so bold as to ask you to drink if it hadn't been for what I heard the doctor say to his son about you as he went past my yard a quarter of an hour ago."

"What was that?" asked the clergyman, with considerable interest.

"'Why,' said he, 'the pastor was terrible dry this morning!' and I thought he meant it."

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Turned the Trick.

Mrs. Mordecai Hammerfest turned pale as her husband entered the dining-room for breakfast.

"Mordy!" she gasped. "Do you—don't you feel well?"

"Perfectly," he replied, in seeming surprise.

"But—but, you are in your—your underduds!"

"Tell me something I don't know. Pass the butter, please," said Mr. Hammerfest.

She passed the butter, remarking nervously: "But Mordy, dear, as you came in I saw you didn't have any shoes on."

"Well, what of it. Your hair is in curl papers, isn't it?"

"Why—y-yes."

"And you have on a wrapper, haven't you?"

"Yes."

"Very well, then."

And he went on eating his breakfast in silence except when he asked her to pass the butter. Then he went upstairs and finished dressing, and the next morning and on succeeding mornings she reported for breakfast in regular clothes.

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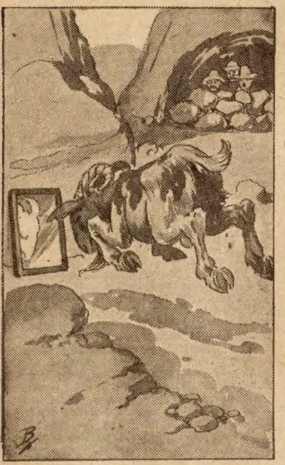
Most men would be ashamed to preach half what they practice.

THE SOCIABLE GOAT

By EARL H. EMMONS



He let go.

"DID I ever tell you the yarn about Kansas Smith and the sociable goat?" asked "North Pole" Peters, as the Chair Warmers' Club settled about the stove in Simpson's grocery. The club members admitted their ignorance of the matter and the old-timer proceeded to enlighten them.

"It all happened back in the old days when I was knocking around in the West, and at the particular time when I was in Las Vegas with Shorty Bruce and Red Simmons preparing for a trip over into the mountains to root up the festive nugget. We were almost ready to start when in blows a little shrimp of a man callin' himself Smith and purportin' to hail from the realms of Kansas, and right away he wanted to put in with us and help hunt something. He looked like a decent and respectable chap, did Kansas—which name we hung onto him by common consent—and outside of his associatin' most too frequent with soap and water and razors and lookin'-glasses he appeared honest, so we decided to let him ride.

"We got away in a day or two, headed northeast, and after trampin' over two or three million mountains and poking into everything we come across, finally settled down in the western corner of some place or other and started to tear up the terra firma. First we plowed out a sort of cave or dugout in the side of a hill and moved in our junk. Then we grabbed our picks and went after the tan metal. It was a likely lookin' place we struck, but somehow it didn't seem to pan out to any hilarious extent, and while we uncovered enough of the yellow to make fair wages, we didn't accumulate the stuff in any large and discommodious quantities.

"Still the place looked good and so we kept pluggin' along, always hoping to hit a strike, and everything went peaceful and without any hilarious excitement until the tenderfoot began to miss the comforts of his eastern Kansas home and kick about the grub. And what do you suppose was eatin' him? Milk! Yes, sir, that's what he was yelpin' about. Milk. Said a man ought to have it. Couldn't get along without it. Claimed it was the staff of life and all that kind of bunk. Talked like a milk wagon advertisement. He was raised on a dairy farm.

"Well, in the course of his aberration he got so milk hungry, or thirsty, that he began to talk of gettin' a cow. A cow in that place where nothing ever growed outside of cactus and rocks since things first started. Of course, we showed him the error of his ways and pointed out why a bossy would feel sad and out of place there, and then what does the gazoot do but flop right over and acquire an attack of goats? Yes sir. Said he WOULD have milk. He would get a goat because a goat could eat anything, and he kept up the chatter, as I said, just like an advertisement, until at last he created a market and we all sort of got the milk fever, and one day we sent him over to Las Vegas to see what he could do on the goat market. There didn't happen to be any goats in Las Vegas at the time, but somebody told him of a fellow down in Texas who had a goat ranch and Kansas sat right down and wrote the fellow a letter and included money for a goat to be sent up. Then he got a Greaser kid to bring the nanny out when she arrived and he come back to camp.

"As I said, we all had caught the fever more or less by this time and Shorty, who was the head cook of the bunch, began to talk of the wonderful and astonishing messes he could get up with the aid of the juice and when one day about two weeks later we saw a man coming over the trail with a small quadruped in tow we give a whoop of joy, knocked off work and went down in a body to meet the lady and extend the hospitalities of the community.

"It's a sad world. Just when you think everything is lovely and the goose is suspended at an altitudinous angle, something sneaks up and hands you such a wallop in the neck that all your calculations are rendered entirely unfit for further use. We got our goat all right. A fine goat. Perfectly good, reliable and durable goat as goats go, but Kansas in his joyful haste had carelessly overlooked stating what brand of goat we wanted, or what we wanted it for, and the goat we received wasn't born under the right star ever to make a howling success in the dairy business. His horns stuck out too previous and his whiskers would have become tangled up in the milk bucket and besides he smelled considerable like a glue factory that had moulded and decayed.

"Of course we kept him. We bought him and it was a long way back to Las Vegas, and then we didn't care about the fellows getting the merry chuckle on us, so we didn't say anything, but just looked real pleased and kicked Kansas a few times and let it go at that.

"'We don't really need milk, anyhow,' said Kansas, 'and he will be a lot of company for us here in our loneliness.'

"So we adopted Oscar, which was the moniker we gave him by popular consent, and when there wasn't anything else to do we teased him and pulled his whiskers and twisted his tail and in other ways made him feel at home in our midst, and his life wasn't such a failure after all.

"He was the darndest critter I ever saw, Oscar was. After he got acquainted he seemed to enjoy our company and when we teased him he would rise up and butt us into the distant horizon with the greatest enthusiasm, wearing a happy smile all the time, so we had a lot of fun with Oscar while it lasted and we didn't regret so much that he didn't happen to be a female of the species.

"'Oscar ain't what you would call entirely fragrant,' said Red one day, 'but after smelling his mildewed person a while the air in the shaft doesn't seem near so bad as it used to.'

"So everything was all right and we went along taking things easy and turning out a little of the Mongolian stuff and kiddin' Oscar, while he ate cactus and gravel and pick handles and our boots and pants and got fat on the diet.

"Then one day Red and I had a reckoning and when it was over we discovered that our supplies was runnin' terrible low and when we figured our assets we found our pile didn't amount to enough to swing a vote in Adams County, Ohio, and we felt discouraged. We didn't have enough to stake another trip and could see right there that we had to make good on our present location or beat it back to Las Vegas and go on the bum. Red was still figuring when he made a discovery.

"'Say, we're dang near out of dynamite, too,' he said. 'When we use it all up we might as well quit. Where the deuce did it go?'

"'I left a half box down by my hole,' I said, 'and Shorty and Kansas have some over where they're drilling and there's—'

"But right there I stopped abruptly and in somewhat of a hurry. I had sauntered over to the opening of the dugout to see what I could see and happened to look down toward where I had been rooting into the rocks and what I saw just naturally made my hair get up and kick the crown of my hat. There was that half box of dynamite right where I had left it and also there was Oscar with a happy grin on his face chewing up a nice big stick of those fireworks and lookin' mighty pleased about something. That explained to my entire satisfaction where our missing dynamite had gone, but it didn't make me feel any happier.

"I didn't say a word. I just grabbed Red and pointed and he turned white so sudden that his freckles seemed to jump out of his face and stick around like warts, and about the same minute for some reason or other Kansas crawled up out of his hole and looked Oscar right in the face twenty feet away. Oscar liked all of us fairly well, but he was real fond of Kansas particularly, and when he saw him that soured chunk of animated death just trotted over to him pretty near tickled out of his hide. Kansas, on his part, had a lot of brotherly feeling for that goat, too, and always had treated him like a friend and gentleman, but somehow when he saw that half stick of mountain wrecker hanging out of Oscar's mouth he appeared to feel bad. He seemed to have received sad news from home or something and wanted to get away where he could wrassle with his great sorrow; and he just rose up and started for the cave as if he had rushing business there.

"Of course as soon as Kansas started Oscar started, too, and when Kansas would stop and try to drive him back Oscar would grin all over, rear up playful-like and try so hard to butt him that it was all Kansas could do to keep from faintin' dead away. How he finally got away from that loaded olefactory nerve disturber I don't know, as I was considerably busy myself helpin' Red gather up all the rocks and junk in the neighborhood and piling them up at the mouth of the dugout. You see, Oscar was a whole lot sociable in his way and he had a habit of sleeping in the cave right along with us the same as anybody else, but with a stummick full of dynamite and a restless disposition he looked different as a bedfellow and we kept right on filling up that hole with a good deal of alacrity.

"Anyhow, Kansas managed to keep more or less in the lead until he got near home, and then with a final spurt he come up the pile of rocks and tumbled into the cave on his ear while Oscar stopped outside and looked real surprised and hurt by the proceedings.

"It was getting well on toward evening now, and all at once we happened to think of Shorty. Shorty was still down in his shaft poking into the rocks, and when we let out a yelp he come up lookin' sort of grouchy and wanted to know what all the cussed celebration was about. As soon as he hollered Oscar looked around, said, 'Well, here's some companionship,' and started right over toward Shorty filled with joy and explosions.

"'Look out,' yelled Red, 'he's full of dynamite!'

"'He's full of what?' asked Shorty; and right then he got his eye on the end of that boom-stick on which Oscar was still chewin' and I never saw any man put such whole-hearted enthusiasm and careless abandon into his movements in my life. He seemed just to rise up out of that hole like he was tied to a balloon, and the minute his feet touched the ground he was speedin'. That tickled Oscar half to death. He thought it was some kind of a new game and he let loose the clutch, threw on the high speed, tossed the brakes overboard and came after Shorty as fast as the ordinances allowed. But Shorty had it on him. Shorty was runnin' on dry ground, but he was shedding such a wealth of cold, clammy perspiration behind him that it looked like rain and made the road considerably slippery and hazardous for Oscar; and by an extra burst of speed on the last lap Shorty reached the cave first, slid up over the barricade and fell in while we hoisted the grub-box up and plugged the opening just as Oscar came under the wire.

"Well, sir, I never saw such a look of injured innocence and sad grief on any human face as that smell-animal wore when he climbed up on our barricade and peeked through the cracks at us. Likewise I never felt quite so peculiar before nor since as I did when Oscar got impatient and tried to butt a passage into the cave. Every time he moved I thought I could hear the chunks of dynamite rattling around and knocking together inside him, but this might have been imagination.

"You see, Oscar was a terrible sociable goat and he seemed to feel that slight real keen, and it made him so downhearted that he didn't seem to care a cuss whether he fired himself off or not, and every time he would butt the grub box we crawled back into the cave as far as possible and plugged our ears. But as the fellow said, it's an elongated highway that don't have some curves, and at last the suspense was broken when night came on and Oscar withdrew while we slumped down on our blankets and shook like men who had stood up to be shot but were missed. As we was quiet and peace-lovin' wayfarers we hadn't seen any use in lugging along a lot of artillery on the trip and it was with surprise and regret that we realized there wasn't a goat in the outfit or anything else which might serve to put the mortal kibosh on that putrid sheep without getting dangerously close, and Kansas wouldn't hear to it anyway.

"'As attorney for the defense,' said Kansas, 'I move against capital punishment. He don't mean any harm and if we let him alone a few days until he has time to digest the stuff he won't be dangerous.'

"'Defense!' growled Red. 'We're the defense, and while your argument on behalf of your client, the plaintiff, is a work of oratory and art, I want to rise and ask who's going to rush the can while we are in here waiting for that glue factory to pass the danger mark?'

"That opened a delightfully new and interesting line of thought, but it didn't make us any more cheerful, and right away every son-of-a-gun began to realize what a burnin' thirst he had. You know how a little thing like that will take root. As soon as you think you can't get something, then you begin to want it. We hadn't thought of a drink before, but now we sat there pantin' for water and wonderin' how long we'd live, until at last I suggested we draw cuts to see who would go out and beard the bewhiskered sheep in his own domain. As fate would have it, the lot fell to Shorty, but he didn't feel no ways honored by the commission and he bid us all good-by before he started.

"'Good-by, Shorty,' I said, 'and may Heaven help you if Oscar hands you a wallop and goes off. I hate to see the lot fall to you more than any one else, for as you know a goat will butt anything that looks like another goat and hence I fear for your ultimate return. Farewell.'

"'Wait a minute. Wait a minute!' yelled Shorty sudden, and tried to look like he was thinking hard. Then he let out a wild whoop and dived back into the far end of the cave, where he rattled around a lot and when he crawled out with the pail in one hand and his life in the other he was holdin' something inside his shirt and wore a grin.

"I won't dwell on the next few agonizing moments while we waited for the fireworks which didn't come. After a while back come Shorty with the H_2O and a considerable tickled look. After that we took a swallow of water and a big chaser of Squirrel and formed a relay sleep-team for the rest of the night; but Oscar seemed to have gone off somewhere to drown his sorrow or eat some more dynamite and we didn't hear him around any more.

"It happened I had the last watch and as I peeked through the cracks lookin' for the enemy as the sun sneaked over the hills I was somewhat surprised to discover that a bright flash hit me in the eye, which was peculiar, as the dugout faced the west. Then I moved over a little and discovered what the reason was for this phenomenon and kicked Shorty.

"'What's the main idea?' I asked him, and pointed.

"'Listen,' Shorty whispered, and doubled up in a corner while he indulged in a violent giggle fit. 'You remember,' he said, when he got it all out of his system, 'You remember tellin' me last night how a goat would butt anything that looked like another goat. Well, that give me an idea, and I sneaked Kansas' lookin'-glass out with me and fastened it down there against that big rock in the face of the cliff just about at the height where Oscar would see it and—wow, look at that!'

"I was lookin' and I saw Oscar amble out of a hole in the cliff, stretch, rub his eyes and then get in line of the mirror. He stood and looked at it for a minute with the most curious expression on his face I ever saw, and then he strolled down toward the thing to see what it was all about. He came up to it slow like and looked. 'Sufferin' tin cans!' he yelled as he saw his reflection. 'It's another goat!' And he run backwards about forty feet, dropped his head, gave a low, guttural ha, ha! and uncoupled his speed.

"He started right from the scratch and every jump he gained time. Then when about fifteen feet from the rock he doubled up, uncoiled like a spring and went the rest of the way by the air route. That was the most fervent and whole-souled butt in which I ever saw a goat indulge and the accompanying explosion tumbled our barricade all over the surrounding landscape and shook the rattlesnakes out of their holes.

"We all went down to look things over after it had quit raining rocks and goat hair, and I will say that Oscar done a fair job of blasting for an amateur and he might have developed into a howling success as a miner, but we never saw him around any after that and also Kansas never could figure out what happened to his lookin'-glass. But in the face of the cliff where the excitement occurred was a hole big enough to dump a skyscraper into and right there we discovered the biggest vein of free gold ever uncovered in that neck of the woods."

* * *

Guessed Wrong.

Smith and Jones met in the smoke end of a Pullman car one afternoon, and during a gabfest Smith referred to the town into which he had just moved.

"The streets of the blooming burg," he eloquently described, "are the crookedest of anything in that line on the face of the earth. You may not believe it, but a couple of days after we got there my wife had a cat that she wanted to lose, and told me to take it over and leave it along the river about a mile distant. Well, sir——"

"I see, old pal," smilingly interjected the other. "That's where you lost the cat all right."

"You've got another guess," returned Smith. "If I hadn't followed the cat I would never have found my way back home."

A Millionaire Detective

Or, Plumbing the Underworld

By Wilder Anthony

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PART II.

OFFICER JENKINS' CASE.

"IT'S JUST two months ago today, Tim, since you entered my employ," said Harold Burden. "Thus far your duties have been easy and pleasant, but the time for action has come. What have you learned recently?"

Tim Kelly, former tramp and yeggman and once known as "The Weasel," scratched his head. Clad in a sober business suit of mixed gray, well-fed and prosperous, he little resembled the starving vagabond of two months previous, whom Burden, after sundry tests of his own, had added to his corps of assistants.

"You needn't be afraid," the young, boyish-looking millionaire continued, when Kelly hesitated, "to tell me all you know. Don't forget our compact—I shall not repeat anything you tell me of your former pals. I simply want the information for my own use, and I can see that you know something."

"Well, Mr. Burden," Kelly, thus encouraged, began, "for the past ten days, accordin' to orders, I've been mixin' with my old friends. At first, sir, they was a bit suspicious of me—thinkin' I'd turned reformed an' all that; but I talked 'em out of it, an' I've learned a little, sir. But——"

"But what?" Burden prompted cheerfully, when his assistant paused in apparent perplexity. "Don't hesitate, Kelly. Out with it like a man, my friend, and don't feel that you are 'snitching' on your old comrades. I shall not harm them, you know. Our game just now is the dishonest policeman—the man who is, or has been, your natural enemy."

At this assurance Kelly's sharp features brightened somewhat, although it was still easy to see, as he made his report, that he was struggling between two duties. One, a feeling of loyalty toward his old companions in crime; the other, and stronger, his feeling of affection and admiration for the man who was now smiling at him so pleasantly.

"Well, sir," he explained, a trifle sheepishly, "it's the Briggs & Conrad jewelry store this time. Pinky Williams, Slim Brodie and Jimmie Scott are the men. It's a safe crackin' job, set for about one, Saturday night, an' Tom Jenkins, the patrolman on the beat, is in it. The boys are trustin' him again even though he must have had a hand in scraggin' Patterson."

Harold Burden nodded shrewdly.

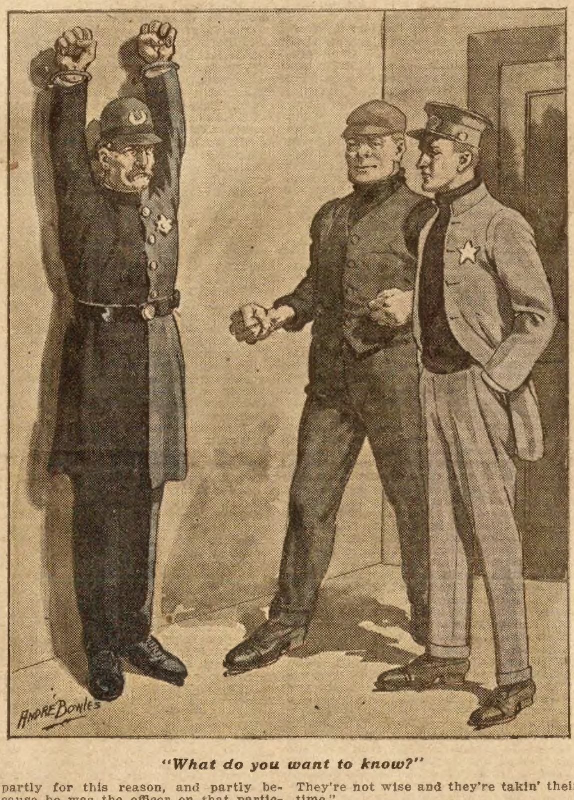
"You've done well," he commented. "That is just what I wanted to find out. It gives us our chance. I already know something of Jenkins' record and I think you are right; he sent Patterson up in order to save himself and others higher up. He's only a go-between, Tim; his superiors are the real culprits; but it's through Jenkins and his kind that I mean to reach them. You may go now."

When Kelly had gone, the millionaire leaned back in his chair and smoked thoughtfully. At last his carefully considered plans were about to culminate in the first of a series of coups against the rampant dishonesty in the police department. He knew beyond shadow of doubt that certain men, high-salaried employes of the city and men respected by the rank and file, were growing fat on the money they obtained by their illegal protection of the criminal classes. In his—Burden's—opinion these men were far worse morally than the self-confessed thief and yeggman; the latter was, at least, frank and open in his actions. He fought society and as a rule he paid for it. Not so the dishonest official, who hid his nefarious undertakings beneath an outer garment of probity, and whom no then existing law seemed able to reach. It was Burden's intention to gather such proof of these crooked deals that, when offered to the courts of the city by a man of his undoubted standing, it could not be ignored, be the guilty who he might. As a preliminary move it was necessary to snare the go-between, the dishonest patrolman, who, acting under directions from his chief, dealt personally with the crooks and received the department's percentage of their loot.

The jewelry store of Briggs & Conrad, one of the richest and oldest firms in the city, was located in the main shopping district. It was a large stone building, four floors and a basement, three of which were devoted to showrooms and salesrooms, the fourth to the offices of the firm, while the basement was divided into warerooms and workrooms.

The safe which Kelly's informant had designated as the one to be cracked was a massive affair of chilled steel and concrete, fitted with three combination locks and protected by an elaborate alarm system. It stood at the rear end of the ground floor.

To such experts in safe-blowing as Williams and Brodie, the mere opening of the safe presented few difficulties. All they required was opportunity and the necessary tools; but the burglar alarm was another thing. This must be kept from bringing a squad of bluecoats when the safe door was opened, and it was partly for this reason, and partly because he was the officer on that particular beat, that Patrolman Jenkins was considered a necessary adjunct to the success of the enterprise. His terms for a partnership in the robbery were high —he insisted upon a third of the proceeds—but the thieves did not balk at this. They were used to police bleeding and they felt that Jenkins' protection would be worth its price.



"What do you want to know?"

Midnight Saturday came dark and foggy, an ideal night for the purpose in view, and the thieves felt very sanguine of success as they slunk into the alley at the rear of the big jewelry store. Jenkins was not with them; he stood across the street in front of the building, his back conveniently turned and his eyes and ears on the alert for any possible interference. Earlier that evening he had tampered with the alarm wires in the police station and he knew there was nothing to fear from that quarter, especially as a friend of his—a certain sergeant—was in charge of the station that night. Next morning, after the robbery was all over, it would be easy enough to say that the alarm had not worked. Who could prove otherwise?

Jenkins had no fear that his partners would try to "hold out" on him. Not that he trusted them—far from it; but he knew they feared him. If they did not play fair, he could arrest them on sight—any charge would do—and they knew it. Consequently the big patrolman whistled softly to himself and idly swung his night-stick by its strap in pleasant anticipation of the harvest he would reap on the morrow, while he waited for the signal that would denote completion of the job. Briggs & Conrad's private watchman had been "fixed," and the thought of possible failure never occurred to him. Everything had been planned too carefully.

Suddenly the officer swung his ponderous bulk around and peered intently into the mouth of the alley which had swallowed the safe-blowers some time before. Then he swore in an ugly undertone. There was a clatter of running steps and a man in gray uniform and peaked cap dashed up to him.

"Robbery, officer!" he gasped breathlessly. "There's three yeggs tappin' the safe in Conrad's. I just spotted 'em and it's an easy pinch for the two of us. They're not wise and they're takin' their time."

"The devil you say! Who in —— are you?" growled Jenkins, inwardly cursing the fate which had caused the jewelers to put in a new watchman on that night of all others.

"John Scanlon," answered the man in the cap. "New watchman—first night on —Donnelly's sick. Some luck for me, eh? But come on, man. They'll slip away on us. I seen 'em, I tell you."

The patrolman thought rapidly. For all his beef he was no fool and he saw instantly that he must outwardly agree with the man and accompany him into the store. There, where no one but the thieves could see, it would be easy enough to knock the interfering fool on the head. To Jenkins, at that moment, human life seemed a little thing as compared to the money at stake. He would cheerfully have downed Scanlon in his tracks had the public street not been a risky spot for such work, late though it was.

"All right," he grunted. "I'm with you, bo."

Gripping his heavy night-stick tightly, he followed the darting figure of the watchman into the alley and around back of the store. Here it was very dark and the patrolman proceeded with all the caution he would have employed in a real stalk. He did not believe in unnecessary risks—the yeggs might attack him before they knew who he was if he entered too abruptly, and besides he had a part to play. For the time being Scanlon must be fooled into thinking that his companion was as keen as himself at the prospect of a big arrest. After getting the watchman into the store Jenkins intended to signal his partners and help them dispose of the watchman for good and all.

The two men crept silently through the basement and up to the first floor. Here a dim light from a shaded electric bulb enabled them to move down a long corridor in the direction of the safe. Scanlon tiptoed ahead of Jenkins, his eyes fixed on the corner where the safe stood and where faint sounds betokened the presence of the yeggmen. He little realized that the patrolman, some six paces behind, was already measuring the distance for a blow with his club.

The safe door was flung wide open when they burst upon the thieves. Pinky Williams was, in fact, in the very act of filling a large canvas sack with sundry packages, while his two companions were looking on.

"Hands up!" cried Scanlon, leveling his revolver at the little group.

With a startled oath, Williams dropped the bag and reached behind him. Brodie and Scott, their hard faces evincing various degrees of surprised alarm, shrank against the safe, too scared to think rationally for a moment.

Pinky Williams, however, did not draw his gun. He might have done so, even in the face of the watchman's steady weapon, for he was a desperate character and had fought his way out of more than one similar predicament, but when his eyes fell on the big, blue-uniformed figure behind Scanlon his body lost a little of its tenseness and one eyelid drooped in an almost imperceptible wink. In a flash he took in the entire situation and he waited passively while the officer set himself for a blow with his club. Slowly the heavy stick swung up. In another second it would have descended with crushing force on Scanlon's head, when there came an interruption.

Jenkins, intent on his dastardly purpose, had eyes for nothing else until he felt his wrist seized in a viselike grip. Something round and cold was pushed against his neck and a stern voice ordered him to stand still. With an oath and a vain wrench to free himself he looked around.

He was in the grip of a big man, a man even larger and stronger than himself, who held his right wrist in one hand and a heavy revolver in the other. Two other men, who seemed to have sprung from nowhere, pointed steady weapons at the three yeggs, while Scanlon had pocketed his revolver and was smiling exultantly.

"All right, boys," he said tersely. "Put him"—indicating Jenkins with a nod—"into the car. Do as I told you about the others. Be quick about it!"

Without so much as another glance at the prisoners he turned and began to hurriedly throw the scattered loot back into the safe.

Jenkins went limp as a wet rag. From what had happened and a glimpse he got of a small badge on his captor's vest, his dazed mind jumped to the conclusion that these men were detectives. Somehow, he thought, his crooked dealings had been discovered by the authorities, and the whole thing was a plant. He had been caught in a trap. For a while every vestige of fight left him, and he accompanied the giant who held him without the least offer at resistance, having first been disarmed and handcuffed.

At the farther end of the alley a closed automobile stood waiting and the patrolman was rudely bundled into it. His guard jumped in after him and the chauffeur started his car without a word being said. Twenty minutes later the car stopped on a dark corner and Jenkins was ordered to get out. As he rose to obey a bandage was drawn over his eyes from behind and made fast; then his arm was seized in a firm grip.

By the time the helpless officer's numbed senses began to rally from this last outrage he felt himself piloted down a short flight of steps and a rush of warm air told him that he had entered a building of some kind. Then he was ordered to halt and there was a wait of many minutes before his eyes were uncovered and he was permitted to look around.

He found himself in a wide, low-ceiled room, very sparsely furnished, with whitewashed walls and no windows. At one end was a small table behind which sat the watchman, Scanlon. At his left stood three men in citizen's clothes, all of them very stern and businesslike. Jenkins gasped. Something in Scanlon's face, seen now for the first time under a strong light, was familiar, and the policeman suddenly remembered that the watchman was no stranger to him. He was not a watchman at all, but Mr. Harold Burden, the young millionaire, and said to be the wealthiest bachelor in the city.

Burden, noticing the expression of incredulous recognition on the patrolman's face, smiled grimly.

"You know me, I see," he said. "I thought you would. Allow me to introduce my friends of whom you must also know something: Tim Kelly, Chick Morrison and Dave Fuller. Ah! you recognize them now, I see." This last exclamation was called forth by the startled gasps Jenkins gave as his eyes rested on the former crooks.

"What the h——l?" he began, glaring at the now grinning trio in utter bewilderment, when the millionaire interposed.

"Don't get excited Jenkins," he remarked calmly. "You'll understand presently. We are all here for a purpose, which you should guess very easily. For years you've been waxing fat on your pickings from men like these gentlemen here were at one time. Don't look surprised. I happen to know, you see, that under your brother's name you have a rather large fortune on deposit in one of our banks—too large by far to be honestly saved out of a patrolman's pay."

Jenkins scowled. He had courage of a sort, and now that he realized the trap he was in his nerve returned somewhat and a crafty expression supplanted the amazement his face had hitherto shown.

"What kind of a game is this?" he demanded, with an appearance of heat. "You're interfering with an officer on duty, and even you, Mr. Burden, can't go so far without getting into trouble."

Burden laughed.

"I wouldn't adopt that tone, Jenkins," he advised. "You know me and you know that I can explain my actions at any time necessary. I'm not in this thing for personal gain. Your case is different. You were caught red-handed tonight, while in the very act of braining me for my interference with your plans, and the fact that you took me for somebody else won't help any. You would just as cheerfully down me this minute if you could do it and get away. Remember that I have evidence enough right now—Williams and his pals have not kept silent—to send you to the penitentiary for a long term if I wish and you had better think twice before you refuse me anything."

At this thinly veiled threat the patrolman squirmed uneasily. He knew Burden was right—his position was decidedly uncomfortable at the very least—but even then he did not fully understand why he was there.

"What do you want?" he asked finally, in a more respectful tone. "What's become of those yeggs? You've turned 'em loose with their plunder, I suppose."

"Not exactly," was the quiet answer, "although they are not in custody. They're on their way out of the State; but the property they tried to steal is in a safe place and Briggs & Conrad have been notified of the attempt made against them. Now to your own affairs.

"I know your history pretty thoroughly, Jenkins, and it's a contemptible one. For years you've been in league with the worst criminals in the city, making them pay you large sums for the small amount of freedom they have enjoyed. Personally, I consider you a far greater scoundrel than any crook you've associated with; but enough of that.

"You are here for a purpose, my man." Burden's voice grew suddenly hard and metallic and his boyish face was very grim. "I've got you and I mean to use you, Jenkins. You're a crook, a crook of the lowest kind, but you're not alone. There are others—men higher up in police circles—who are even worse than you are. It's these men I want, and you're going to help me to get them."

Jenkins shook his head doggedly, albeit he swallowed hard. He knew now beyond doubt just why he had been brought where he was, but he had not been chosen as a go-between by his chief for nothing. He was determined to fight to the last.

"You're in wrong," he said. "I ain't done anything crooked and you can't prove I have. That's all I've got to say."

"Very well," Burden retorted crisply, "we'll see about that. I dislike violence, but it's useful sometimes. Kelly, tie him up."

In grim silence Kelly stepped forward and seized the manacled policeman by the arm. Turning him around, he propelled him to the wall where a couple of stout rings had been set into the brick. When Jenkins' arms had been drawn above his head and fastened to these, the ex-yeggman stepped back.

"All done, sir," he said.

"Morrison," the millionaire addressed the largest of his men, a huge ex-convict with muscles of steel. "You've been put through the so-called third degree, I believe. Now you have a chance to get even. Perhaps you can make this fellow talk. You might try, at any rate."

Morrison grinned and took off his coat.

"I'll do my best, sir," he said.

Jenkins began to sweat copiously. He had practiced the third degree too often not to know its efficiency as a tongue loosener. Trussed up as he was he would be a plaything in Morrison's hands; but still he kept silent. It was not until the ex-convict, moving lightly and springily as a cat, stepped toward him with a vengeful grin, that his nerve weakened.

"What do you want to know?" he asked hoarsely.

"The truth," Burden answered sharply. "The identity of the man or men behind you in your dishonesty."

"What do I get if I tell?" came haltingly from the helpless officer.

"Twenty-four hours' grace—no more," Burden replied. "Before you leave here you will be required to sign a confession which I shall deliver to the Mayor at the end of twenty-four hours. You are guilty, Jenkins, and you deserve jail, but in return for your information I am willing to give you a chance. You may escape if you can. If you persist in keeping silent you will gain nothing, for after we are through with you I shall turn you over to police headquarters. You can take your choice."

Jenkins swore and wrenched at his bonds. Then, seeing the glint in Morrison's eyes, he surrendered.

"All right," he groaned. "It's a pretty tough deal either way, but I'll tell you what I know."

This capital story will be concluded in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you if you send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

Persuading Them.

"You can't imagine," said the earnest little woman, "how I wish I had had that book years ago when the children were mere babies! What I might have accomplished! It makes me want to cry now when I consider the time wasted! Still, I am going to begin at once and make up for lost time!"

"I don't take much stock in it," commented the lady who had brought up six children, all of whom had escaped the penitentiary.

"Mercy!" cried the earnest little woman. "How can you feel that way! What particularly impressed me was the part which said not to hamper their individual development to give them mental freedom, to allow their minds to work out problems their own way, and always to answer their questions, because they may be working to the point where they will be Presidents or something famous some day! As for corporal punishment—it made me feel I deserved to be shot at dawn because I used to spank them once in a while! I am going hereafter to treat them like human——"

"Mother!" interrupted 7-year-old Henry, "kin I go over to Oscar's?"

The earnest little woman smiled at him beamingly. "No, darling," she said. "I told you yesterday you could not go to Oscar's at all!"

"Why?"

"Why, I explained to you very carefully," said the earnest little woman, in some surprise. "Oscar is not the sort of boy I want you to be with. He is not the right kind!"

"Why isn't he?"

The earnest little woman regarded her son a long moment and counted ten. "Run along and play with your sister, Henry," she said in an even voice. "You've been told once all about it, and that's enough!"

"Oh, maw!" Henry begged. "But I wanna go! Please let me go!"

"Henry!" said his mother. "Stop this at once! You can't go and that's enough, and you know why, and it doesn't make any difference what you want—"

"I wanna go to Oscar's!" roared her son loudly. "I wanna go! I wan——"

Rising hurriedly, the earnest little woman clutched her recalcitrant son's arm and turning him over her knee administered the old-time discipline. After which he departed growling.

"Of course," said the earnest little woman, somewhat flushed, "that was unavoidable. In special cases I guess you have to spank them. Argument seems to make no——"

"It's been my experience," said the woman who had brought up six, "that argument hasn't any effect on any one this side of the grave! Of course, it's good for the lungs, sort of exercises them, if you care for that, but for children especially argument is nothing but an annoying noise!"

"The book said you should always explain to them when you refused them anything," said the earnest little woman, somewhat mournfully. "And then their quick little intellects would grasp your meaning and see that you knew best—what?"

"I just choked," said the woman who had brought up six. "I never knew even a grownup who would abandon something he wanted to do and thank you for your wisdom if you tried to stop him! I suppose you are following the few rules with Susanna, and in that case it is all right to let her climb that tree out there—when that limb breaks she's now on it will develop——"

"My goodness!" gasped the earnest little woman, dropping her work. "Susanna! Come down at once!"

"But you must let her work out her own problems!" reminded the woman who had brought up six. "She'll learn a lot about gravitation before she gets through——"

"Susanna!" cried her mother underneath. "Come right down!"

"I don't wanta!" protested Susanna, climbing higher.

"Susanna!" shrieked her parent. "It'll break—and you'll hurt yourself badly——"

"Why will it break?" inquired Susanna, experimentally bouncing up and down on the limb in question. "What makes it break?"

"Susanna!"

"I don't wanta!"

Crack! Crash!

Binding up the lump on Susanna's head with trembling hands, somewhat later, the earnest little woman spoke at last through her teeth.

"Susanna!" she said distinctly, "if ever again you don't mind instantly when I tell you to do a thing, without stopping to talk about it, I'll give you a spanking you'll remember! You are lucky you're not killed!"

"Why!" inquired Susanna.

"Cheer up!" said the woman who had brought up six, as the earnest little woman clutched her brow and breathed hard. "Only I'd dig a hole in the back yard and bury that book! There's nothing much beats the old way of bringing up children!"

"I'd like jolly well to meet the woman who wrote it!" vindictively said the earnest little woman.

* * *

TRYING TO PLEASE

"Do you like it?" inquired the man's wife, twisting her head about. The man regarded her with the helpless expression that masculinity is always reduced to when considering styles.

"I know what he meant now!" the man burst out at length, irrelevantly. "At the time I couldn't understand, but now I see—I heard a man say that the new style of hairdressing made a woman look like a cat with its ears tied back! That's just it! It's it exactly. It——"

"You can stop your chant," said the man's wife, in an offended tone. "I deduce that you don't like it! Well, let me tell you, Howard Arthur Bopps, that I paid one good dollar to get my hair dressed this way, and it's the way every one is wearing her hair, and it's stylish and you've got to like it! Haven't you noticed?"

"Well," admitted the man, slowly, "seems to me that I have for some time now been wondering what had happened to the scenery. Of course I noticed that their ears were showing scandalously and then I did wonder why they fixed their hair to look as though somebody had yanked it back and nearly pulled it out by the roots and wadded it up way back on the tiptop of their heads! Is that really the style?"

"It certainly is!" said his wife. "And when you get used to it it has an air of its own."

"I guess so," admitted her husband sadly. "Only women never looked so sweet as when they curled it all around their faces and fluffed it loose, and, oh, you know how! They look so queer nowadays!"

"I suppose," said his wife, indignantly, "that you don't like this dress, either? I bought it last week!"

"Did you?" asked the man. "Couldn't you get away? Or maybe they chloroformed you! Amelia, tell me honestly, didn't women look nicer when they wore gently flowing garments that swished round their feet that you couldn't see, and that covered up their chests and protected their spinal column from the blasts of a cold, censorious world? What is style against really artistic clothes with real beauty in their lines? Why, whe I look back and remember how sweet you looked then it doesn't seem possible that you are you, now! That dress you have on this minute resembles a dancing dervish's skirt, worn over a salt sack around your ankles—and I'd hate to say what the waist looks like. I can't see enough of it to describe it! Did you really part with good money for that?

"How you women do need a strong, protecting hand to guard you every minute! I've no doubt the clerk who sold you that garment received enough bonus to retire on for the season for getting rid of a hitherto unsalable atrocity!"

"You don't want me to look like a frump, do you? That's what I'd be if I didn't follow the styles!"

The man sighed. "How foolish women are," he meditated. "Why can't they realize how much better they would look in sensible clothes such as I have described! How much more attractive they would be, and appealing to the masculine eye! I certainly would be proud if my wife showed that she was sensible enough and independent enough to abandon freak dressing and—er, where are you, Amelia?"

The man grunted with disapproval when he found she had indeed vanished. He considered it rather rude of her when he was getting along so swimmingly in his oration.

For half an hour he read fitfully, still wondering. Then there was a cough at the door and he looked up. He started and his eyes bulged.

Under a huge pompadour that dripped with curls his wife's face simpered at him. A hat so big that it touched the door jambs towered above her. A skirt five yards around the hem filled the lower part of the door and her general figure was that of an hour-glass. Up under her ears a high collar choked her. Her sleeves resembled balloons.

"Good gracious!" gasped the man.

"The hat is one I wore three short years ago," said his wife, chattily. "The dress dates back five years and the hairdress two. I have done my best to attain the sensible, artistic clothes of past days that you were shouting about. How do you like 'em?"

"Oh, my goodness!" groaned the man. "If you've got to look insane I suppose it will attract less attention if you do it after this year's models! Drat the styles, anyhow!"

* * *

Changed Her Mind.

"Girls," said young Mrs. Allison, adjusting her collar to a coquettish angle and smoothing her pique skirt, "I have news! Now, what do you think?"

"War or millinery?" inquired the young matron with auburn hair, concisely.

"Neither," said young Mrs. Allison, with a grin. "Matrimony."

"Gracious!" ejaculated the sewing circle, as one seamstress, with bated breath and suspended needles. "Hurry up and tell us, Celeste!"

"I never hurry," said young Mrs. Allison, placidly. "Haste, my beloved hearers, is the curse of the American commonwealth, the destroyer of courtly manners and the handicap of the rising generation, because——"

"Do you charge admission?" interrupted the young matron with auburn hair, pertly.

"Because," continued the speaker, firmly, "it racks the nerves and wastes the vitality and reduces the mind to a state of weariness. It makes the fat man look fatter and the thin man look thinner."

"She sounds like a patent cement house advertisement," murmured the auburn-haired matron. "Cool in winter and warm in summer—or is it the other way about!"

"And," finished young Mrs. Allison, with determination, "it cakes the powder on every woman's nose!"

"Nonsense, Celeste," said the fluffy-haired blonde. "Weren't you ever late for a dressmaker's appointment?"

"You'd better believe I was," conceded young Mrs. Allison, with sudden ruefulness. "Three-quarters of an hour, this very morning. Where's my powder rag now?"

"In your belt," remarked the auburn-haired member crisply. "And what is your news?"

"Oh, that!" said young Mrs. Allison, brightly enthusiastic again. "How could I forget it! Such news, my dears! Quite important enough to honor this occasion of our last meeting before we adjourn for our several vacations—to fade our hair and peel our noses. All right, then, I'll tell. Melissa is engaged?"

"No!" cried the members, in unison.

"Will some one please tell me," inquired the fluffy-haired blonde, "why it is that when a girl, even the handsomest of girls, announces her engagement, the feminine audience always says 'No,' just like that with one voice?"

"The world is astonished at her temerity, my love," answered young Mrs. Allison, promptly. "Here's Melissa now!"

The sewing circle fell upon the tall brunette in the doorway and showered her with felicitations.

"Now," ended the matron with auburn hair, "tell us about him, dear. You've always said you'd never, never, never marry a red-headed man, a person in the railroad business, or a Democrat, so, I suppose, he is none of those things. Is he tall and dark?"

"His complexion is about like yours," hesitated the graceful brunette, with her eyes on her thimble.

"W-what?" cried the sewing circle, aghast.

Young Mrs. Allison grinned again and looked out of the corner of her eye, at the fluffy-haired blonde. "And what does he do for a living, my child?" she inquired persuasively.

"He's secretary of the J. B. & M. railroad," said the bride-to-be. "And," she added, indignantly, before the shout of laughter quite drowned her voice, "he says he voted last time for Wilson, but he has promised me positively that next time he'll vote for Jane Addams!"

* * *

Going Fast.

Once there was a hypochondriac who used to think that he was dying about three times a week. One day he was driving out in his automobile, and one of these spells came over him. On the road ahead of him he happened to see his family doctor speeding along in his roadster. He felt so sick that he applied all his power in order to catch up with the doctor as soon as possible.

But the doctor saw him coming and he used all the gas he had to get away from him. For about three miles they had a close race. Finally, however, the doctor had some tire trouble, and the hypochondriac drew up alongside.

"Doctor," he shouted, "stop a minute! I am dying. Darn it all! I'm dying!"

"You must be," grunted the physician "I never saw anybody going so fast as you are!"

* * *

The Limit.

Joel Chandler Harris, the author of "Uncle Remus," was at his desk one night when an old-time reporter looked over and said: "Joe, how do you spell 'graphic'? With one 'f' or two?"

"Well," said the kindly Uncle Remus, who was too gentle to hurt even a common adjective, "if you are going to use any, Bill, I guess you might as well go the limit."

The Stool Pigeon

Or, Fox Slavin, Detective

By Julian F. Darrow

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CHAPTER X.

IT WAS certainly far from the intention of the shrewd old sleuth to acknowledge the true state of affairs to the wealthy Mr. Throgmorton.

The gentleman may have frequently been worried concerning the habits of his son; he must even have laid awake many nights wondering in what way Billie might disgrace the family name.

But surely in his wildest imagination he could never have dreamed that the crime of murder would stand recorded against a Throgmorton!

No wonder the wretched and repentant Billie had been panic-stricken when he awoke to the disagreeable truth.

It would be giving this proud man his death-stroke, possibly, suddenly to explode such a fact before him.

Nor was it at all necessary to the success of the plan the old sleuth had in mind.

He smiled, and shrugged his shoulders as the gentleman asked the question with which the last chapter closes.

"But, Mr. Throgmorton, possibly you are taking things for granted when you jump at such conclusions," he said, with a significant inflection to his voice.

"Do you mean in connection with Janet Morris?"

"Yes, sir."

"But the girl cares immensely for the young scamp. She is one in a thousand; and if Billie ever manages to reform I shall believe that Janet has been the means of his salvation."

"All that you say is very true, sir. The young lady is charming, and as good as she is handsome. Still, perhaps Janet may not be the only person interested in the restoration of Billie to your favor."

"By Jove! you are right, sir."

"You have thought of another, then, sir?"

"Yes."

"Would you mind telling me who it is?"

"Why, there can be no objection that I see. And Hollis has often been badgering me to give Billie another trial; though somehow his way of presenting the case has angered me more than it has done good."

"Pardon me, but do you mean Mr. Hollis Sutcliffe?"

"No other. My nephew, and a very proper as well as clever fellow. Somehow, as my foolish boy gives me more and more trouble, Hollis seems to be drawing closer and closer to me."

The detective gave no evidence of the thrill he felt, but continued to calmly discuss the matter.

"No danger of his ever going the pace, sir, I imagine?" he went on.

"Never. Hollis is too well balanced for that. Doubtless he is human, and has his faults; but not being the stupid blunderer that Billie is, no one ever knows the fact. Hollis is a diplomat. I have often told him he ought to get in the service of the country at some foreign station as consul, or secretary to a legation."

"You see a great deal of him, I suppose, sir?"

"Why, yes. Hollis is very thoughtful. He knows how badly I feel about the escapades of my son and does his best to console me. The only fault I find with him is his intemperate way of trying to make me forgive Billie when he knows how my mind is set against any show of weakness."

Again the detective drew a long breath.

He believed that his mission to the ex-coffee king was turning out splendidly.

From no other possible source could he succeed in getting such first-hand information concerning the very sympathetic nature of Mr. Hollis Sutcliffe!

And how fortunate it was for Mr. Throgmorton that in his time of mental distress he should have such a reliable and manly staff to lean upon?

"Excuse me for mentioning it, sir, but apparently your opinion of Miss Janet is shared by another gentleman; for I imagine Mr. Sutcliffe also thinks that her influence over Billie is wonderful!"

The gentleman moved uneasily.

"Yes, that must be true; and yet only a magnanimous soul like Hollis could forgive the man who had worsted him in a race for a pretty woman's heart," he said.

"They were rivals, then?"

"Why, yes, ever since Hollis came to New York several years ago. Billie awoke to the fact that his sweetheart was being courted by others, and he pressed his suit with such vigor that he won out."

"They had grown up as children, I believe?"

"Oh, yes, and Billie had always fought Janet's battles for her, being some years older. I imagine the little puss always cared more for him than she did any one else."

And Old Slavin, remembering those blue eyes brimming with unshed tears, did not doubt it in the least.

"You say Mr. Sutcliffe took his defeat manfully?" he went on, quietly, so as not to arouse the suspicions of the gentleman that he was probing matters supposed to be family secrets.

"Why, yes, so far as I could see. The poor fellow was hard hit, too. I felt sorry for him. Often when Billie and Janet would be cooing and billing, thinking themselves unobserved, like most lovers who are blind to others, Hollis would gnaw his lip and look so distressed!"

"But he did not go away to forget?"

"Oh! Hollis is not that kind of a weak chap. He told me it was his nature to inflict pain on himself in order to effect a cure. 'Heroic treatment,' he called it with a laugh."

"H'm! some persons like to make martyrs of themselves, I understand, sir."

"Oh! don't get that notion in your head. Hollis has a good time, after his own fashion. No little mishap like a love affair that has gone wrong could ever upset his wonderful poise."

"At any rate, sir, it has been fortunate for you, in this time of uncertainty, that you had a nephew close at hand possessed of such sterling qualities."

"I have often thought that, and sighed to think how pleased I might have been had Billie only turned out like his cousin. Then I should have been proud of him, rather than ashamed. Somehow Hollis has inherited the Throgmorton blood from my sister, while Billie—well, his mother, though a most charming woman and best of wives, came from stock that had a blank ancestry."

"Poor Billie!"

Unconsciously the old detective said to himself the very words Janet had used so often.

Perhaps Billie was not to be blamed so much after all for going astray, with such a worldly father; and if his mother had lived she might have guided his faltering feet past the pits that trapped him, for at least she was human, with a mother's love for her own offspring.

The detective, while talking in this fashion, was laying in a stock of information calculated to bridge over the gulf that had yawned before him.

He had found a double motive to account for actions that up to now had seemed both mysterious and baffling.

But this was not all he had done.

As usual, while asking questions, and leading the conversation along the line he wished to explore, his eyes had been on the alert.

And he had latterly become conscious of a very strange fact.

Just opposite where he was sitting he noticed that Mr. Throgmorton had a small but apparently serviceable house safe.

Doubtless he frequently happened to have valuables that he wished to keep secure.

It might be that the best of the family solid silver was stored here, to be taken out on special occasions; or, when the gentleman brought papers home with him that he would not care to risk losing, they were thrust in here, and the door closed against all who did not know the combination.

Alongside this safe was a massive davenport.

Should the gentleman ever find himself drowsy, after his dinner, he could drop down here and catch seven winks before going out to the opera or some soiree.

To the surprise of the detective he had noticed a very peculiar fact in connection with this same article of furniture.

Ordinarily a davenport is supposed to have but its customary number of feet, which, as the sleuth remembered, would be four.

This one was supplied with still another, making five; and what seemed strangest of all, the odd foot looked like a human one, for it was incased in a shoe of some sort!

Without beating about the bush he became convinced that there was a man hiding under that sofa!

A casual glance might have caused one to conclude that at some time Mr. Throgmorton may have cast one of his own shoes under the article of furniture; or else his valet had misplaced some of his master's footwear.

Two things disproved this theory in the start.

First of all, the detective noted that the shoe, besides being more or less soiled, was of a type that an exquisite like Mr. Throgmorton would scorn to own.

It was clumsy and uncouth, such as only one belonging to the lower classes would wear.

But there was a second and even more positive reason for his belief.

He had watched carefully while talking to the owner of the mansion, and was ready to take his oath that he had seen the foot move!

Plainly an intruder must be secreted there!

CHAPTER XI.

IT WAS only natural for Old Slavin to impute some sinister motive to the unknown party who was hiding under that davenport in the rich man's library.

All his life he had been finding men who made a practice of endeavoring to rob those who chanced to be in possession of much of this world's goods.

But how could a thief have gained entrance to this room, especially a clumsy rascal who, having hastily crawled out of sight, did not seem to know enough to pull his feet sufficiently under shelter to avoid being seen?

Why, from the manner in which his attention had been drawn to the moving shoe, Old Slavin could almost imagine the hidden culprit wanted to be discovered!

And so the detective was wrestling with one of the queerest problems in all his experiences, as he sat there, and calmly asked Mr. Throgmorton questions.

"Have you been out since dinner, sir?"

When he put this question suddenly, the gentleman appeared more or less surprised.

He could not for the life of him understand just what sort of man this visitor was. But then if Hollis Sutcliffe had sent him for some purpose, why, of course it must be all right.

"Yes, sir, I have, for a short time. I had an engagement at the home of a friend, and spent a couple of hours there. In fact, I don't believe I could have returned more than ten minutes before your card was brought in to me."

After that the detective could see light!

No doubt this fellow hidden under that article of heavy furniture must have managed to slip into the house while the gentleman was out. It might be that he had designs on that safe, and either while getting ready for operations, or, possibly as he was working, he had heard the front door closed as the owner let himself in with his night key.

This must have been the signal for the intruder to make himself scarce.

He may even have picked out his hiding-place beforehand; so that all he had to do was to slip under and lie low, When the gentleman had sat around for awhile, reading, he would of course grow sleepy, and retire. Then the field would be open to the enterprising burglar to get busy again. All of this looked very simple to the astute man of clews and trails; in fact, it was too easy, and hence aroused his suspicions.

"Do you ever keep much of value in yonder little house safe, Mr. Throgmorton? continued Slavin, as he pointed across the library.

Again the gentleman favored him with a stare.

"Really, you are an extraordinary gentleman, Mr.—er—Garrabrant. And excuse me for saying it, but is this curiosity on your part warranted by the fact of your being in the employ of my nephew?"

"Depend upon it, sir, I have a very good motive in what I am asking; otherwise I should not manifest the slightest interest in your personal affairs."

"You puzzle me, sir, exceedingly. Nevertheless, as you impress me favorably, I shall answer your question frankly. Yes, there are times when I have articles of considerable value in there. To tell the absolute truth, it holds some silver that is worth many thousands of dollars to me, right now."

"Is this fact generally known, sir?"

"Why, I can hardly say how far the knowledge may have been spread. Of course my servants know it, particularly the butler who let you in just now; but they have been with me long, and I trust them fully."

"Still, sometimes these facts leak out accidentally and get to the ears of those who make it a business to relieve rich gentlemen of a little of their superfluous wealth."

"I understand so, sir; but all the same

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I have never yet been visited by a burglar, and I long ago made up my mind not to worry unnecessarily. But see here, you must have some good reason for speaking in the way you do?"

Mr. Throgmorton, for all his assumed indifference, began to frown and otherwise show interest.

"I have indeed, sir."

"Would you mind, then, explaining to me why you bring this unpleasant subject up at a time when we are discussing matters altogether foreign to such a thing?"

"Certainly, sir. I realize that you are entitled to an explanation. Just watch me, please."

So speaking the detective arose from his seat.

Imagine the gentleman's astonishment when his visitor drew something from his pocket that glistened in the electric light; and his startled eyes fell upon a revolver!

He, too, arose, and watched the mysterious movements of his guest as though a dim suspicion was forcing itself upon him that the pleasant old gentleman must be out of his head.

The detective stepped over to the davenport. Bending down, he inserted a hand suddenly. As his strong fingers gripped an ankle he gave a jerk, stepped back a pace, and to the utter amazement of Mr. Throgmorton dragged a man into view.

The fellow was a disreputable-looking customer, and bore all the earmarks of a typical burglar, as doubtless the gentleman had often seen described in papers and magazine stories.

He was wriggling desperately, and growling terrible threats, half under his breath.

"Stand up, you!"

The discovered thief, turning his head to look at the speaker, found that he was covered by something he had reason to respect—a revolver.

He scrambled to his feet.

"Hold up your arms!"

Apparently the burglar's courage must have oozed from his finger tips, for he obeyed with the most accommodating alacrity.

"What under the sun does this mean?" gasped Mr. Throgmorton, as he stared at this spectacle.

"Just as I hinted to you, sir, the fact that you are in the habit of carrying valuables in your house safe has in some manner managed to leak out, and this enterprising party came here tonight with the intention of relieving you of the surplus."

"Good Heavens! can it be possible! And he has been hiding under there all the time?"

"Oh! not so very long, sir. You remember telling me you were out, and had only arrived home, say about ten minutes before my arrival?"

"That is true. Then he was here when I came in?"

"That goes without questioning, sir; for how else could the fellow have crawled under that davenport?"

"Perhaps I even interrupted him in his game?"

The burglar was looking dogged and sullen, as might have been expected under the circumstances, with a prison sentence staring him in the face.

But as the gentleman spoke these words Slavin was almost sure he saw a shadow of a grin pass over that ugly countenance!

He knew the man, too, although the other had not recognized the famous detective, thanks to his excellent make-up.

"I shouldn't be at all surprised, Mr. Throgmorton. There was a light in here when you came, I assume?"

"Oh! yes. And do you know, I remember thinking that it was strange the heavy portiere, usually hiding my safe, should have been thrown aside. However, something else was on my mind, so that I even forgot to draw it in place again."

"Well, he undoubtedly had designs on your safe, sir!"

"But it has a difficult combination. No ordinary burglar would be able to get into it unless he used dynamite or powder; and that would make noise enough to bring the servants."

"Ah! perhaps he may have known the combination?"

"It may be so, sir. My butler of course knows it, and one or two others. Possibly it may have fallen into unsafe hands. I shall have it changed at once."

"Would you mind doing something for me, sir?"

"Do you mean with regard to this scoundrel?"

"Yes. Take that cord that held the curtain up and wrap it around his wrists when he puts them behind him."

"Say, boss, what's the use——" began the caged thief, in a whining tone.

"Hush up! Now put your hands behind you and cross your wrists. That's right. Mr. Throgmorton, can you fasten him snugly?"

"Oh! yes, and in a way he'll find some difficulty in getting free from. There, it is done, sir."

"Now, I have a reason for asking you to do another thing, and I hope you will favor me. Please begin to search his pockets, sir."

Again Old Fox Slavin thought he saw the trapped burglar allow his face to show a fitting grin, though apparently there was anything but a humorous look to his case.

The ex-coffee king, with a grimace, thrust his hand into one pocket.

He drew out an ugly-looking knife, a little tool of the jimmy order, and some matches.

"Try another pocket, please, sir."

This time what Mr. Throgmorton secured seemed to give him a shock, for he bent over to stare at it, while every vestige of color forsook his face.

It was a key he held up, and the sleuth recognized it as one of those used in a night latch.

"It is Billie's key!" groaned the wretched Mr. Throgmorton, aghast.

CHAPTER XII.

THIS time the detective was positive that he could not have been deceived.

The burglar actually chuckled!

Apparently there was something remarkably strange connected with this visit of the cracksman to the house of the rich man, and at such an extraordinary hour of the night, too.

"Tell where you got that key!"

"You have just made an assertion, Mr. Throgmorton, that must have a peculiar significance. Did I understand you to say that that key belongs to Billie?"

"Yes," faltered the other, with downcast head.

"What reason have you for saying that, sir?"

"The best in the world. We have only two keys in use, and you see that mine is here on my ring!" with which he drew a bunch of keys from his pocket, selected one with trembling fingers, and held it up. It matched the other exactly.

"But you must understand, sir, that a locksmith could easily make a key like that if he had a pattern temporarily?"

"Yes, no doubt; but mine never leaves my possession. Besides, I happen to remember this little mark which you can see on the other key;" he could not bring himself to speak Billie's name just then, for the connection filled him with horror.

"Well, that should stamp it as Billie's key, all right, sir; but then he may have lost it?"

"Supposing he did, how would this fellow, on finding a key, know just which house in all New York it belonged to? Your motives are all very well, sir, but I am sorry to say they do not convince me. Besides, now that I look more closely at this wretch I believe I have seen him before!"

"Indeed!"

"Yes, I am positive that he was the fellow I saw talking with Billie just three days ago."

"You saw this man talking with your son, you say? Where was this, may I ask, sir?"

"At Broadway and Twenty-third street. I saw Billie standing there as if expecting some one, for he was scrutinizing each passerby. Then all at once this man stepped up and engaged him in conversation. Oh! what a blow to my pride! To think I have brought up a viper that in my old age threatens to wound me fatally!"

"But this is a remarkable thing you are telling me, sir. Is it not possible that your eyes deceived you, and that it was merely some one who looked like your boy?"

"I only wish I could doubt my eyes, but they have not betrayed me as yet, sir. Besides, Hollis recognized him also!"

"Oh! I see; Mr. Sutcliffe was with you, then?"

"He had asked me to go down town with him and meet a party who wanted to go into some business deal with him; but unfortunately he was out when we called."

"Did Mr. Sutcliffe say that he saw Billie talking to this man?"

"No, but I knew he did."

"In what way, sir, may I ask?"

"Why, he tried to draw my attention another way. Hollis is always thinking of ways to save me from painful experiences."

"Pardon me, but when he tried to draw your attention to another quarter it was too late, was it not?"

"Oh, yes, for I had already discovered Billie."

"Still, the intention was doubtless good, on the part of your devoted nephew. And I suppose you must believe but one thing in connection with the coming of this thief to your house."

The gentleman sighed heavily.

"Much as I hate to give it credence, the circumstances are such that I would be a fool to deceive myself."

"You believe Billie gave him his night key?"

"Yes."

"And perhaps also the secret of the combination to your safe?"

A groan was the only answer.

"Now, the question is, what ought we do with this rascal here? Would you want me to take him to the nearest police station and have him locked up, sir?"

"But that would necessitate making a charge against him, wouldn't it?"

"Of course, sir. The police would want to know all about it, and insist on your telling just how he came to enter with a key!"

"Then let him go free!"

"But that seems too bad," ventured the detective, simply to play a part before the burglar.

"You fail to understand what it must mean to me. I would have to confess that my son had entered into a conspiracy with a common thief to rob his own father! Think of the shame! Oh! I'd rather let a thousand rascals go free than face such a condition."

"Thanks, boss!" muttered the trapped burglar, grinning openly now.

"Look here, you, tell the gentleman just where you got that key!" said the detective threateningly.

"Picked it up on the pavement," asserted the other, just as Sleuth knew he would.

"And guessed which house it belonged to, is that the truth? Perhaps you just went along, trying every door, until you hit this building! Of course you expect us to believe that fishy yarn, you villain!"

The burglar was evidently not at all alarmed concerning his ultimate disposal. He understood that he had a club which he could hold over the head of Billie's father and force him to compromise a felony. So he just shrugged his broad shoulders, as though he were willing they should read between the lines all they chose, and discover the truth.

"Well, if you utterly refuse to prosecute, I suppose there is nothing for us to do but turn this slippery rascal loose again on the street," went on Old Slavin, as though very unwilling to do this same thing.

He himself took a hand at feeling in the remaining pockets of the fellow. If he found anything that interested him, he made no comment just then.

"Yes, get rid of him, sir. Here, I will go with you to the door, so that even my butler may not know of my shame," remarked the gentleman bitterly.

"Say, you coves won't turn me loose with this here wrapper 'round me dubs, I hopes?" remarked the man who had been pulled out from under the davenport.

For answer the detective proceeded to unwind the curtain cord.

"Now, come along with me to the door. The next time you're caught in a scrape like this, my covey, perhaps you won't fare quite so well," he remarked, as he gripped the fellow's arm.

"That's all right. Born on a lucky day, I was, yuh see, gents. Lead me along, mister. Knocked one o' me lamps on the corner o' that blamed ole sofa when I tried to crawl under, an' put her out o' commish. But sure, I ain't got no kick comin'."

They took him to the front door, and as Mr. Throgmorton opened this the detective gave his prisoner a sudden shove, accompanied by a kick that sent him sprawling down the flight of stone steps.

He immediately jumped to his feet and ran off like the wind, as though fearful lest the owner of the house change his mind.

"Please come back to the library with me, sir," said Billie's father, as he laid a hand on his visitor's sleeve; "I don't know why it is, but somehow you seem to have impressed me with confidence. Hollis was wise to send you to see me. Think what might have happened if you had not been here to discover that low wretch hiding there! Ugh!"

He shuddered, as he, in imagination, saw the Throgmorton honor torn to shreds when the family name was mentioned in big black type in the yellow journals, as the awful story was related to the minutest detail.

"But I have not as yet confessed that I came here at the suggestion of Mr. Sutcliffe, sir," protested the visitor, as he again entered the snug library.

This time it was the owner who made sure to close the door connecting the room with the hall.

"Well, let that go, sir, if for some reason you do not wish to admit it. Perhaps Hollis has bound you to secrecy; it would be just like his modesty. Have a chair, please. I am trembling like a leaf, for this has been a terrible shock to me."

The sleuth looked at Mr. Throgmorton.

He was trying to make up his mind whether he should take the other into his confidence at this stage of the game, or wait longer. One thing he saw, and this was that the gentleman was suffering keenly.

"He does love his boy, then?" thought the detective, "and it is not his pride alone that has been shocked. Yes, perhaps I ought to relieve this dreadful suspense. I believe that the case is now advanced far enough to warrant it."

"I too chanced to make a strange find in one of the pockets of our friend, the clumsy burglar, sir," said Old Slavin, aloud. "Perhaps he stole it from some one, for it certainly was never purchased by a thief of his caliber."

He held up the article, which was a handsome silver pocket match-safe, with a little diamond gleaming in its front.

Nor was Old Fox Slavin very much astonished when he saw his companion look eagerly at the jeweled article.

"Why, what a singular coincidence!" he exclaimed. "He must have stolen it from Hollis!"

CHAPTER XIII.

YOU recognize the match-safe, then, sir?" continued the detective quietly.

"Why, certainly. I gave it to my nephew only last Christmas. How in the wide world do suppose this rascal could have obtained possession of it?"

"Oh! well, perhaps he forgot to return it after borrowing a match!"

Mr. Throgmorton stared at him.

"Do I understand you to intimate, sir, that my nephew is acquainted with that ruffian?" he demanded, with a fine show of indignation.

"Well, you had no hesitation in believing that the burglar knew one member of your family, sir?"

"But I saw him talking with—Billie!" the last word was only pronounced with an effort.

"Yes. So he might have stepped up to you, on the corner, after he had received a certain signal, and engaged you in a brief conversation. But would that have stamped you as a pal of his, sir?"

"Why, what—are you really trying to

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tell me that meeting may have been accidental?"

"I most certainly mean that, sir."

"But—the latch key?"

"Could have easily been secured from Billie at some previous time, by one who had access to his room in the miserable quarters he was occupying; and given to our friend the burglar—for a purpose!"

"But what on earth would anybody want to do that for?"

"Just to accomplish the end that has been attained—to make you believe your son had entered into an unholy alliance with a crook in order to rob you, sir!"

"Just Heavens! am I dreaming to hear you say that, Mr. Garrabrant?" stammered the gentleman, clutching both arms of his chair, and staring at his guest.

"No, but I fancy the time has come for me to open your eyes to a very disagreeable fact, sir. In the first place, I want to tell you that my name is not Garrabrant, though for the present that will answer very well."

"You stun me, sir. But Hollis——"

"Hollis had nothing to do with my coming here. Your first guess was the true one. Janet sent me! I was an old friend of her father's years ago. And sir, I have promised that sweet girl I shall find out just what there is back of all this business. I believe I am even now on the high road to accomplish the feat, and unearth as foul a conspiracy as ever came my way!"

"A conspiracy, sir?"

"Yes, nothing more or less than that; a black plot, which has for its purpose the ruining of Billie!"

"A plot to ruin Billie! Oh! what can you mean? Who could be so cruel? Billie has himself to blame for all that has happened."

"I suppose he has, after a fashion, because of his inherited weakness; but I happen to know that the boy has seen a light and never again will allow the spirit of gaming to have control over him."

"That is good news, sir, if true; but explain to me what you meant by saying there was a plot to ruin the boy!"

"Just what that stands for. I have a dozen things to prove it, and before many hours pass I expect to confound the scoundrel who has been playing such a clever double part, with evidences of his duplicity."

"But who can it be? Billie never had an enemy save himself, that I know of?"

"Well, this one managed to conceal his true feelings under a mask of friendship. You have mentioned him often tonight while we talked here, and always in a way that revealed the utmost confidence in his loyalty."

"Great Heavens! do you mean Hollis?"

The detective bowed his head in the affirmative.

"But it seems ridiculous. What object could he have in the first place?"

"Stop and think, my dear sir. If you broke with Billie, and wiped him out of your will, who would profit by the fact?"

"Yes, yes, that is so!" exclaimed Mr. Throgmorton, tremendously excited now.

"Then, in case Billie was shown up to be a villain of the deepest dye, one who would not hesitate to ally himself with a common burglar and plan to rob his own father, would not Janet's love die a natural death? And consider again, my dear sir, who would profit in such a case?"

"Hollis! You thrill me with these things, even though they seem so utterly visionary that I cannot force myself to believe them. Tell me more. You speak of evidence—on what do you found your theory, sir?"

"Let me mention a few things. First, no burglar as shrewd as Skidoo Charley, would be silly enough after he had slipped under a sofa to allow his foot to stick out as he did, and actually move it from time to time as if he wanted to attract attention!"

"You mean that he expected to be caught when he came in here using that night key?"

"Undoubtedly. He is one of the smartest crooks in New York today. Catch him entering a crib before two in the morning, at least. He expected you to discover him and that you would summon assistance in order to effect his capture. Then, when he was searched, that key would frighten you into letting him go, just as it panned out."

"Can it be possible? Would Hollis ever dream of originating such a fearful game and deceive me so terribly?"

"It seems to me that if you could believe Billie guilty so easily on the strength of circumstantial evidence, it should not be any more difficult to picture your clever nephew in the role of a villain, sir."

"But you must have suspected something of this before you came to see me?"

"I did, most assuredly. Although as yet I have not had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Hollis Sutcliffe, I give him credit for originality and daring. He has apparently left no ground uncovered in arranging for the utter downfall of the one he wishes to injure."

"And Billie, my boy?"

"Mr. Throgmorton, I hope that presently, when I have succeeded in frustrating the evil schemes of this master plotter, you may receive a repentant boy into your fatherly arms, and the past be forgotten."

"You are a wonderful man, sir. I don't understand how you manage to do it, but somehow you have given me what I have not known for many days—hope that all may come out well. But Hollis—it seems incredible, incredible!"

"He is a crafty manager, that is all, sir. He probably had an arrangement to meet Billie on that corner where you saw hi—. Skidoo Charley was engaged to come along and engage Billie in conversation when he had a signal that you and Hollis had arrived. That part of it was easy. There are other spokes to the wheel. I was on my way to investigate one when the notion came to see you."

"But you said Janet sent you?"

"She engaged me on the case, that is all. She believes in Billie's ultimate salvation as she does in her own hopes of heaven. And through her alone he will be changed into a credit to the Throgmorton family, I have reason to believe."

He did not wish to tell the father what a terrible crime Billie feared lay at his door.

It could do no good, and would only add to his anxiety.

"Do you know, I can hardly believe I am not dreaming and that I will not presently wake up to find it a mist that has vanished," said the gentleman, rubbing his eyes.

"Well, I'll leave this match-safe with you, and every time you feel inclined to doubt the story just take it up in your hand."

"Are you going, sir? When may I expect to see you again? I would not like to lose track of you, now that you have awakened my hopes again concerning poor Billie!"

There it was once more—poor Billie; when Old Slavin was now of the opinion that the boy ought to consider himself rich beyond compare, with so true a sweetheart to believe in him and to enlist others in his behalf.

"I shall certainly see you again in the morning, sir; but I must be moving on now. There are a few other things needing my attention, connected with this most remarkable case."

"But suppose I should have a visitor before you came."

"Meaning your nephew, I presume?"

"Yes, Hollis might drop in on me."

"In that event I think it would be best for you to remain upstairs in your room, and send down word that you are ill—a severe headache would answer."

"Thank you for the suggestion. I may be able to say that with truth, possibly, from the way my head feels now. But you have done me great good, Mr.——"

"Garrabrant will answer nicely, sir, for want of a better name. I don't think you need worry about burglars breaking in again tonight. That fellow accomplished all he came here for. And if he could be followed after he left this house I honestly believe he would be found making a report to a gentleman you know very well.

Allen Slavin had spent a very profitable half hour under the Throgmorton roof.

And as he shook hands with the ex-coffee king, and passed down those elegant stone steps which Skidoo Charley had covered with one wild leap, he was satisfied that he had made no mistake in coming there.

This capital story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you if you send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

Balking.

"Babies will never show off when you want them to," complained Mrs. Fattun. "I tried to get the baby to say 'mamma' and 'papa' for the minister when he called today, but she wouldn't say it. All day long she says 'mamma' and 'papa' so cute and so plainly, and then when I told the minister he ought to hear her she wouldn't come anywhere near it. I was so embarrassed!"

"I'd say: 'Call papa,' and the baby would say 'Ibpf,' and the minister would put his head on one side critically, trying to recognize the remark as a parental cognomen, but he couldn't. He would look at me as much as to say, 'Is that "papa" the baby is saying?' and I had to admit that it wasn't. But the minister was perfectly nice about it."

"Just like my dog," said Mrs. Fattun's son. "My dog can do all kinds of tricks. He can speak for it and go fetch it when I offer him candy, but when I asked a bunch of boys to come and see his tricks the dog wouldn't do a thing. I threw a stick and he'd look the other way. I would say 'speak for it' and he'd go sniffing off on an imaginary trail."

"That reminds me," said Angelica, "of Cousin Lula Blotts and the new kind of oven she was demonstrating. She got up on the platform to demonstrate the stove and show how particularly well the oven worked, how everything was so beautifully brown that was cooked in it. You know, everything had always gone right previously, so she had no reason to expect disaster.

"'There is nothing like this oven for biscuits,' she said. 'Some way or other biscuits do not taste good unless they are brown. A man will attack a brown biscuit full of pleasant anticipations but a sickly pale biscuit will scare him away from the table. Now I will place these biscuits in this oven and you will see how beautifully they brown in six minutes.'

"She put the biscuits in the oven and went on talking to us, delivering her lecture to a fascinated audience of ladies. When the time had arrived for the biscuits to be the required and appetizing color she open the oven and drew forth the palest-looking biscuits you ever saw. They were as white as milk. She slammed the door and did a monologue for five minutes more, then opened the door again, and the biscuits were still white! It was very embarrassing for all of us."

"Biscuits are like everything else," said Mrs. Fattun. "If they don't feel like blushing they just won't and it is very risky ever to attempt anything in the way of a demonstration."

* * *

Superior Ways.

"Don't talk to me about your wonderful cat, Deusen!" thundered Bangwhipper. "We ourselves have a wonderful cat and the members of my family are always talking about that cat all day and night."

"Well," remarked Deusen, soothingly, "people get tired of wars and strikes and vic crusades, so they find cats diverting subject."

"I think cats are as bad a topic as any," declared Bangwhipper. "The women are bad enough with their superior airs, but when cats take up those same airs it is more than a man can stand. A man should be the head of the fam—"

"Just what part does the cat have in this offensive alliance between women and cats?" asked Deusen.

"They add to the general air of superiority. You go into a room. A cat raises its head from the softest pillow, and, seeing that you are only a man, yawns and lies down again. Cats hear the women talking about wonderful cats but they never hear anything about wonderful men.

"The cat at our house makes me so mad that I'll have to murder her some day. When the members of my family were away last summer the cat and I kept house together.

"When I would start to cook a meal that cat would saunter into the kitchen and look around in a superior and critical way as if to say: 'Well, of all the curious proceedings I ever saw! The way this stupid man messes around is the limit!'

"When I made a savory stew did that cat come begging around? I should say not! I couldn't get the cat to recognize the stew as food at all. I explained what it was to the cat and held it out to the cat, bu she turned her back on it and walked away. I pursued her and said: 'Here, you! Can't you see that this is a stew? An eating stew?' And then she leaped away as if afraid of it.

"I decided then that she might have thought it too hot and did not want to burn herself. I cooled some and presented it to her out in the yard in a dainty saucer. She smelled it, mewed and leaped over the fence. She did it just to be insulting!

"I forgave the cat, however, and after I had stroked her back for half an hour in the living room I took up Eva's guitar and proceeded to play the fandango. I am not much of a guitar player but I do play the fandango very nicely.

"That blessed cat jumped up as soon as I started to play, gave me a reproachful glance, and walked out of the room —out of doors, in fact, and away into the yard. Just to be insulting! Flattered too much by the women and awfully stuck up."

* * *

The Algebra.

There is a certain old German of Wilkesbarre, Pa., whose pride, like that of many self-made men, leads him at times into a sort of patronizing condescension toward those things he did not "have time for" when he was making his way in life.

Upon the occasion of the graduation of a nephew he asked:

"Vell, Wilhelm, vot did dey teach you up there?"

"Greek and Latin," said the boy, "and German and algebra."

"So, so!" murmured the old German. "And vot's der algebra for potatoes, now?"

* * *

The Parade.

Pat, somewhat the worst for liquor, going home through a park one evening ran into a tree.

"Sure, sir, but I beg your pardon. I did not see you, sir,' said he. He ran against a second. Taking off his hat he again apologized. He ran against a third; then a fourth.

"Begorra," said he as he staggered to a seat. "I'll just sit down and let the gintlemen pass. It's just a parade."

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Choosing.

"I admit that I am undecided," said Margaret's father as he paced twice across the room and came to a pause with his back to the mantel.

"You cannot remain undecided long," said Margaret's mother. Margaret tweaked the Angora kitten's ears and said nothing.

"They are both desirable," continued Margaret's father. "It seems to me that the problem is to fix upon the one that is the more desirable. It means providing our little girl with a companion for life."

And they both came to your office today? That was funny."

"No, it was not funny. It was a coincidence, but it was not funny. Ponderson came in heavily, parted his coat tails carefully and sat on the edge of the chair I offered him, smoothed his thinning hair and after his embarrassment talked carefully and well. He has a great deal to offer a wife; he is moderately successful, has a nice home, is a deacon in the church and is of a kindly disposition."

"But he always looks so sad," said Margaret's mother.

"I know. That is because of his tender heart. He has had heaps of trouble. He worshiped his father and his father died. He loved his mother and she was a bedridden invalid on his hands for years. He very seldom smiles, but has a beautiful smile when he does smile."

"What do you yourself think of him?"

"I admire and like him immensely. No one can help liking Ponderson. He is young, too, just the same age as Harlor, though he appears to be ten years his senior.

"It is a hard problem," he concluded, lamely. "I'm stumped."

"And what did you tell him?" asked Margaret's mother.

"I told him I would talk it over with you. He seemed anxious, but not hopeful, when he left. He must have passed young Harlor in the elevator as he went down."

"Mr. Harlor is different."

"Some! No embarrassment about Harlor. He breezed into my office, seated himself on the corner of my desk and 'put it to me' as he expressed it. He has money, which was left to him; he has more than the average share of good looks and he knows the pink section of the newspaper from the first to the last column. I do not believe that he said anything about loving Margaret; but he did say that he believed she loved him and would make him mighty happy."

"Yes? How very boyish!"

"Yes, almost too boyish."

"But youth will be served."

"Youth will be served. But it may be better for our little girl to marry some one who will serve, rather than one who will be served. Mr. Ponderson would never have driven his auto recklessly while Margaret was a passenger. I believe I will tell Ponderson 'Yes.'"

"Papa!" It was Margaret herself that spoke for the first time.

"What is it, dear?"

"You will do nothing of the kind! Am I not to be consulted? I have some interest in this affair. I have not told you the whole story about that auto smashup. We were bowling along at more than the legal speed, we two on the front seat and the bulldog on the back seat, when all of a sudden Mr. Harlor let go of the wheel with one hand and tried to kiss me! I threw back my head as far as I could and he let go of the wheel with the other hand, and the next knew we were both in the ditch, which was about a foot deep with mud, that must have saved our lives. The dog was underneath the auto flat enough for a rug and the auto had turned turtle and smashed against a telegraph pole at one and the same moment.

"We scrambled up and I exclaimed. 'Now see what you did!' 'Yes,' replied he, with a grin, 'but I got the kiss!' 'My dress is ruined!' I sobbed. 'That's right,' said he, 'but I got the kiss!' 'And look at poor Hector!' I cried. 'Rough on Hec,' replied he, 'but he died in a good cause—I got the kiss!' 'And your car is wrecked!' I told him. 'Sure, but what's a car or two,' he replied, 'I got the kiss!'"

"The idea! I bet Mr. Ponderson never so far forgot himself as to try to steal a kiss. If he wanted a kiss he would ask for it like a gentleman."

"Just the same, he grabbed me and kissed me when I told him about the auto accident."

"He did! What did you say to that?"

"I just looked at him! And you should have seen him grovel! He said he was sorry that he had kissed me!"

"I shall say no more, daughter," surrendered Margaret's father.

"It will make Ponderson miserable. I am sorry!"

"But he is used to being miserable, papa. And I don't know that having me for a wife will make him any more miserable than——"

"You don't mean——"

"I do! You two dear sillies thought you were picking out a husband for me when I had him all picked out. Mr. Harlor will soon recover. I'll bet he tried to flirt with your stenographer."

"I did not like to say anqthing to prejudice his case, but he did. What shall I tell him? That I will replace his dog?"

"Yes, with another dog, but not with your daughter!"

* * *

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Awful George.

"I don't know," said the girl who likes to talk, "which one had me madder—the vacant-minded woman or the man who thought he was a village cutup. I made the mistake of laughing at him first and that encouraged him in his deeds of darkness. They sat behind me at a moving-picture show and I was so busy trying to decide whether she really was feeble-minded or just did it because it amused him that I didn't see any pictures. Then, again, if she did it to amuse him, why on earth should he be amused at that sort of thing? Altogether it was very confusing as a problem in conduct.

"Out on the screen came the picture of a man in every sort of hunting tog ever invented—he had buckskins and Norfolk coat and guns and fringes and cartridge belts till you couldn't rest. The woman behind me murmured, 'Oh, what's he doing? Is he going hunting?'

"'No,' said the man,' genially. 'He's merely going out to shoot a few butternuts!'

"'Butternuts!' echoed the lady. 'But——'

"'Daisy,' interrupted another feminine voice, whose owner evidently owned the village cutup, 'don't you pay any attention to George! He's perfectly awful, the things he says!'

"'Well, I thought he couldn't mean it,' said the first woman. 'As though they ever shot butternuts! George, you are too funny for anything!'

"'Oh,' said George, modestly, 'I know a lot more things than that! You just wait!'

"'Now, George!' she protested in a gale of helpless laughter. 'Oh, look at that! What makes him saw the air so?'

"'Well,' said George, 'he was bitten by a tarantula in his youth and ever since then he breaks out unexpectedly. He——'

"'Why, George!' said the person who owned him, 'I didn't know a tarantula bite affected one that way and I thought he sawed the air because he didn't want his daughter to marry the other man!'

"'Well, maybe that was it,' admitted George.

"'My goodness!' gasped the woman who owned him, leaning over to grasp the arm of the other, 'there he is—and, well as I know him I thought he meant it! He's just awful!'

"'Well, but look!' broke in the first woman anxiously, 'what is Mrs. Mitchell doing now?'

"'She isn't Mrs. Mitchell yet,' explained George. 'She just wants to be. If she was Mrs. Mitchell there wouldn't be any story to film and the poor moving-picture man couldn't send his family to Europe!'

"'Europe!' gurgled one of them. 'What's that got to do with this picture? Oh, I see—it's just one of your dreadful jokes, George! You are the funniest! I know I'll just die.'

"She didn't die," said the girl who likes to talk. "When the pretty young girl who took the lead was flashed on the screen she murmured, 'Oh, there's Kathlyn!'

"'Kathlyn!' echoed George in disgust. 'Why, I always call her Kate! I went to school with her son—we were roommates at college!'

"'You were!' echoed the lady whose business it was to be surprised, in awe. 'Why, how perfectly wonderful! Did sche ever come to see him? What was she like?'

"'The girl on the film,' explained the girl who liked to talk, 'was never a day over twenty-five.'

"'Oh,' said George, 'of course that was ten years ago, but her face was wrinkled then.'

"'Mercy me!' said the surprised woman. 'Isn't it wonderful how the moving pictures take out all those blemishes! I never should have dreamed——Goodness Is that a dog? How cunning!'

"'No, no!' cried George. 'Dog nothing! That's the Universal Company's trained gooflinker! Smartest animal you ever saw—has taken the part of a seal, a baby elephant and an ant eater and I see now they have it playing dog roles! Do you know what they paid for that animal? They paid——'

"'Oh, George!' gasped the woman behind me. 'For a minute I thought you meant it. Why, there never could be an animal like that, could there? Of course, I know there couldn't. But there are so many strange things nowadays——'

"'Come on,' said George. 'The show's over. Let's go on to the next and see what strange things we can find there!'

"'Oh, let's!' they giggled. 'You're perfectly awful tonight, George!'

"And he was," gloomily ended the girl who likes to talk. "The awful thing is that unless he escapes from his family he'll never know it!"

* * *

Souvenirs.

"I'm glad I didn't go to Europe this year," observed Hanker.

"You ought to be glad you didn't go to Europe any year," returned Vowser. "Europe is a bad place to go to on account of the relics and souvenirs.

"Never go where there are relics and souvenirs to haunt you. I never grab any souvenirs, no matter where I am. Once I came very near getting a souvenir. It was in San Francisco a day or two after the earthquake and fire. I was walking around and saw a flower pot up on a second-story window-sill. I made up my mind to break my rule and get a souvenir for once. I got a long pole and manipulated it until the back of my neck broke and I finally got the flower pot.

"I walked all around the city viewing the remains and carrying that flower pot, running chances of being shot as a snooper. All day that relic was a heavy responsibility and it weighed upon me terribly. But after a long time I began to feel happy and carefree until I suddenly remembered that I had left that souvenir on the train. It happened fifteen minutes before I reached home. Since then I have always lived the careless, happy life of the nonsouvenirist.

"Every time I see any one breaking his neck or a ten-dollar bill getting a souvenir, I think of my flower pot and do not bite.

"Look at the souvenir man's home! Has he any comforts. No! He is crowded back and back until he is hedged in on all sides. All his friends forsake him. They all know that he is liable to tell them the history of every souvenir he owns, where he got it and all the details.

"There is rubbish in every man's house, such as magazines, herilooms, wedding gifts and Christmas gifts. That is enough without the brickbat from Rome and the Egyptian tear jug, which interesting relics cannot be packed in the same trunk, because, however separated by partitions and other artificial divisions, it is well known that the brickbat will seek out the tear jug and smash it to smithereens.

"When it happens, however, the owner is lucky. He doesn't have to litter up his house with the stuff and there is always a chance that such a catastrophe will break him of the habit. Many slaves to the habit have been rescued in that way."

* * *

Two Meanings.

The different meanings that a simple turn of expression can give a word are often curious and sometimes amusing. An anecdote of Charles Lamb, the famous English author, illustrates this very pleasantly.

On a wet, miserable, foggy day, in London, he was accosted by a beggar with:

"Please, sir, bestow a little charity upon a poor, destitute woman. Believe me, sir, I have seen better days."

"So have I," said Lamb, handing the poor creature a shilling, "so have I. It's a miserable day, even for London."

A similar illustration is of the man who saw some mischievous boys carrying off fruit from his orchard.

"What are you about?" he called, lustily.

"About going!" called one of them, as the marauders disappeared over the fence.

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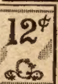

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The Electric Flame

Or, Brahm Yogi's Power

By George Weymouth

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CHAPTER XVIII.

BRAHM YOGI A FORTUNE-TELLER.

MARY CAREW was dressed in some black stuff that served to heighten the exquisite clearness of her skin and deepen the faint shadow of trouble in her [illegible]

"Oh, you are beautiful, beautiful, my dear," said the consul's wife. She had just pinned a rose on Mary's waist and now stood back to enjoy the effect of gown and coiffure. "I don't see how Mr. Crane can help falling in love with you."

"You mustn't put such ideas into my head," said Mary faintly.

"And why not, Miss Bl[illegible]?"

"You see I am only a [illegible], after all. I am just playing at [illegible] regular girl for this one evening, Mrs. Chalmers. It will be something to remember. Tomorrow you must get me another place. Oh, you are so good to me."

"There, there, my dear, no tears," said the good woman, taking Mary into her arms. "You are to be just a regular girl, tonight, and be as happy as you can. Now, let's wipe our eyes. That tear looks like a pearl, but Mr. Crane and the consul mustn't know that we have been crying. You darling!"

W[illegible] final, motherly hug which must [illegible] very comforting to the sad [illegible] Chalmers led the way downstairs where Crane and the consul were [illegible]

"I think you have already met him in most informal way, Miss Carew, but I want to present Mr. Crane," said the consul's wife, after she herself had shaken hands with the young man.

Mary held out her hand with a shy smile, and Crane was saying to himself, as Mrs. Chalmers had said, "Oh, how beautiful, how beautiful you are!"

Mary must have read something of this thought, for she blushed divinely, and thereupon became more beautiful than ever.

"My Hindu man—he is really more of a friend than a valet, Mrs. Chalmers. I usually feel quite ignorant beside him—has just been telling me all that happened this afternoon. I can't tell you how distressed I am."

"And Mary has been telling me," said Mrs. Chalmers. "Let us forget it for the present."

"But isn't your valet a wonderful man, though?" said Mary.

"He is, indeed, Miss Carew. I know you will be interested in learning something about his history. When I met him in Lhasa he was a holy man, a beggar, with extraordinary gray whiskers."

"Oh, is that the one you were telling us about this afternoon?"

"Yes, Mrs. Chalmers."

"The same one that brought Mary here? Why, he looked like a boy."

"I think he is about thirty thousand years old," said Crane.

"I know that kind," said the consul. "I have seen many a one in India. They have strange powers, too, many of them. They do things you can't explain."

"Oh, Brahm is a Yogi, all right. However he does it, he foresees things. If he wanted to set up as a fortune-teller here in Chicago he could make a thousand dollars a day."

"Mary told me how he knew Mrs. Chester was coming, when nobody else did," said Mrs. Chalmers. "I am just dying to see him. Do you suppose I could prevail on him to tell my fortune?"

"We can try, Mrs. Chalmers."

"Oh, that would be delightful. You know that all women are crazy about fortune-telling. I believe the men are, too, only they are ashamed to admit it. Now, let us go in to dinner. You bring Miss Carew, consul," she said, laying her own hand on Crane's arm and leading the way to the dining-room

The dinner was a merry one, and for the moment Mary Carew forgot her troubles and permitted herself to be "just a regular girl," happy with her friends

But when they had left the dining-room, Mrs. Chalmers insisting that the men finish their cigars in her own little parlor, Crane saw that Mary Carew had become thoughtful, and a little sad. He tried to bring her out of her abstraction

"I can't help thinking about your wonderful Hindu," she admitted. "Of course I am a clergyman's daughter, and I have been taught that fortune-telling is nonsense, if not downright wickedness. But your man is so mysterious, and so clever, maybe he could tell us something about Thomas?"

"I believe he could," said Crane, seriously. "I have always been skeptical about this fortune-telling business, but I have seen Brahm do too many wonderful things not to have confidence in him. May I telephone him to come over, Mrs. Chalmers?"

"I was just going to suggest that. Do so by all means."

Crane went to the telephone, and then paused

"Let's try an experiment," he suggested. "Let's telepath him instead of telephoning him, and see if he gets the message."

"It is worth trying," said the consul. "Go ahead."

They were all silent for a moment, and then Crane, blushing a little for fear he was making himself ridiculous, said aloud:

"Brahm Yogi, brother, I want you. At the consul's house"

They were silent for a little while longer, and then the telephone bell rang, the consul answering it himself

"This is Mr. Crane's valet," said a calm voice. "I had the impression that he wanted me for something. Will you please ask him?"

"Indeed! Well, you are right. He was just calling for you. Will you come over here? Yes? All right, thank you."

"Now what do you think of that?" demanded the consul, turning away from the telephone. "He got the message. He's coming. I tell you these fellows are s[illegible] naturally clever."

"I am ready to believe anything, now," Mrs. Chalmers sighed. "I'm half afraid to ask him to tell my fortune. After all, do we want to know what's going to happen to us?"

Within a short time Brahm arrived and was shown into the room. He seemed not at all abashed at the grandeur of the place, but was as calmly courteous as if half his life had been spent in drawing-rooms.

When told what was wanted of him, he looked at Mrs. Chalmers and shook his head softly.

"The mem-sahib will pardon me," he said. "But I cannot tell fortunes. Some things are given me to know, but not out of idle curiosity The mem-sahib is a good woman. Her husband will always love her. She will continue to be happy, and after awhile, let us hope, heaven will send her a boy, and then she will be happier. May the peace of God rest with the mem-sahib!"

"Oh, what an adorable future you have given me," cried Mrs. Chalmers, as the tears sprang to her eyes. Every one there knew that the Hindu, with sure finger, had touched the secret hope of her motherless heart. She wanted a child—a man child

"And Miss Carew," said Brahm, turning to her. "She has met the man who loves her, and she will learn to love him. They will be married. It is well. For love, and marriage, and motherhood, these are the destiny of all women such as she."

"And my brother?" asked Mary breathlessly.

"Thomas Sahib is ill. He has been detained. You will see him soon, and he will be safe."

"Oh, God grant it!" cried Mary Carew. She threw her hands over her eyes and stumbled from the room, shaken by sobs. Mrs. Chalmers followed her, while Crane and the consul and the Yogi talked of many things, as men will when they are together.

It was half an hour before the women returned, and then Mrs. Chalmers paused at the door.

"This has been a very trying day for my little Mary," she said. "We are going to say good night. Mr. Crane may come tomorrow afternoon, if he likes, at two o'clock."

"Indeed, I will be delighted," said Crane.

Mary Carew came in and gave him her hand. "I know you must think me a baby, Mr. Crane," she apologized. "But I could not help crying.

"I think you are an angel," he said [illegible]

Mary's face was adorable with blushes as she came over to Brahm Yogi, and timidly held out her hand.

Today you saved me from a very trying position—indeed from a very dangerous one. Tonight you have given me hope. I can never forget you; never fail to appreciate your goodness."

Brahm glanced at Crane with a sadly humorous twinkle in his eyes. Then he turned back to Mary.

"For forty years I have been trying to starve out the affections of [illegible]," he said whimsically. "I have been seeking the final peace where the ties of the flesh no longer have power to bind me to the earth. But now I am finding life good—a brother, and then a sister. I thought never to touch another woman's hand—but, Lady, I greet you!"

He took Mary's hand in his own and bent over it, brushing it with his lips

"God will preserve you," he said simply.

CHAPTER XIX.

MIKE, THE RED, RECEIVES CALLERS

AT TEN o'clock the next morning The Weasel presented himself at Branders' office on La Salle street. That he had something of courage and capacity, twisted though they might be, was proved by the very fact that he could walk boldly into the office and demand an audience of the king.

The Weasel had sold papers at the

(Continued on page fourteen.)

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All contestants who send in subscriptions on this contest are allowed premiums or cash commission as an additional reward. Our premium sheet includes all the desirable premiums such as watches, air rifles, dishes, bracelets, shawls, etc. Every list of subscriptions you send us entitles you to a premium selected from our Premium list or cash commission at once, and also coupons to entitle you to consideration in the award of the grand prizes at the end of the contest. You cannot possibly lose in making a trial for these grand prizes as you get a reward right along for every subscriber you send us in this contest and at the end your coupons are considered in the awarding of the grand prizes.

There are 71 grand prizes in all, so you stand a good chance to win. Renewal subscriptions count the same as new in this contest. To make it still easier for you to get subscriptions to EVERYDAY LIFE we send you an assortment of beautiful colored pictures size 12x16 inches that are suitable for the parlor or sitting room. You give 2 of these pictures as a special inducement to each subscriber to get them to subscribe through you.

Enter now and win. Do not put off entering the contest, but send your name at once. This is an absolutely free contest and it costs you nothing whatever to enter. Send us your name and address and we will send at once Certificate of entry in this Grand Prize Contest, full particulars, copy of paper, subscription blanks and 16 pictures so you can get 8 subscriptions at once. Everything sent by return mail.

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Electric Engine,
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100 Post Cards,
Solo Guitar,
Stereoscope and 25 Views,
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For the benefit of our boy and girl friends we have arranged to award a fine shetland pony to any one who would rather have a shetland pony in place of any of the first seven prizes. Each pony given in this contest is guaranteed quiet and broken to saddle or harness. Remember, you can have a shetland pony if you want it instead of any of our first seven prizes. All other conditions of the contest as regards ties, etc., being just the same.

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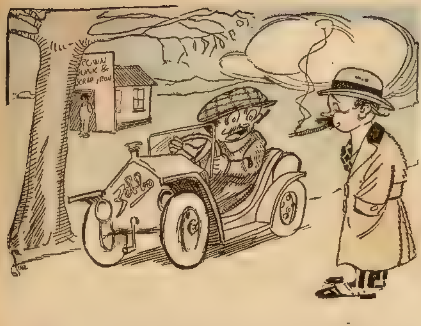


Sparker—"Brown had the nerve to offer me $50 for my car!"
Muffle—"The shark! Why, a museum would give you more than that for it!"

A Dakota Romance.

He—"Now that you have obtained your divorce, we can be married at once, can't we?"

She—"Married at once! Indeed, we won't be married at once, I can just tell you that. For the first time in three years I am a free woman—free as a bird—and I am going to enjoy that freedom for a little while. It's lovely!"

"My goodness! How long?"

"Well, two or three hours, anyway."

An Excuse for Tooting.

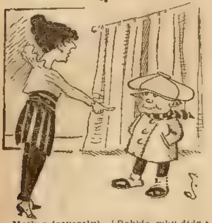
"What makes you sit up there and toot the automobile horn?" asked the passing friend.

"Charlie tells me to," replied young Mrs. Torkins, "so that I won't hear the things he says while he is fixing the machine."

Time Enough.

Daughter—"What! Marry Mr. Moni-bags! I hate him; I despise him; I abhor him!"

Mrs. de Fashion—"Hush, child, you needn't tell him so until after you marry him."



Mother (severely)—"Bobbie, why didn't you take off your cap when Mrs. Jones called?"

Bobby—"Aw, how could I? I had a piece of custard pie in it!"

Her Feet Her Passport.

A Swedish actress narrates how she was taken for a German spy in Paris, and, not knowing how to proclaim her identity and being surrounded by a shouting mob, she felt quite alarmed. Suddenly a lucky idea occurred to her.

She slightly raised her skirt, and showing dainty little feet, exclaimed: "You look at this! Do you call these German?"

She was saved and carried in triumph to her hotel.

Enthusiastic Taxpayers.

Friend—"It's all fixed now. You'll be elected judge. The taxpayers are enthusiastic."

Candidate—"What argument did you use?"

Friend—"I told 'em you could soon fill the treasury fining people for contempt of court."

Father Was Right.

Pater—"Daughter, I'll tell you a young fellow I wish you would grow to like—young Wigley—he'll make a noise in the world just when you least look for it."

Mabel—"You've got him sized up all right, dad; I heard him eating soup in a restaurant the other day."

One Responsibility Shifted.

Gaspit—"Yes, I'm a self-made man."

Cynicus—"Well, I must say you are entitled to a great deal of credit for your charitable act."

Gaspit—"What charitable act?"

Cynicus—"Relieving Heaven of the responsibility."

Not a Napoleon.

Husband (looking up from a book)—"Do you know what I would have done if I had been Napoleon Bonaparte?"

Wife—"Yes, I know. You would have settled down in Corsica, and spent your life grumbling about bad luck and hard times."

Suspicious.

"I am inclined to suspect the sobriety of the last student in our class."

"Why so?"

"When I asked him what were his favorite studies in ornithology, he replied, 'Swallows, bats and larks.'"

Too Much for Mother.

A Pasadena boy asked his father what was meant by the expression: "The woman had a Greek profile." The father put down the paper he was reading and replied: "Why, it merely means a classic outline."

The mother took a hand, declaring the answer was too short, and really a shifty euphemism. "Give our son a long and clear answer," she insisted. Paterfamilias sat up and made this lucid, ornate reply:

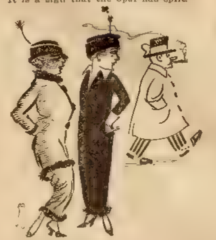
"A Greek profile is a bold silhouette blending the Doric and Ionian expressions and depicting that clear-cut, plastic work of Praxiteles, which is entirely free from the rococo renaissance school and which, in modern melodrama, would be called the marble face."

Both mother and son took the count, and father resumed his reading of the article, "Why Oysters Have Strong Lungs."

All It Means.

Miss Romance—"When an opal, a present from one we dearly love, loses its luster, what is it a sign of?"

Mr Hardhead (in the jewelry line)—"It is a sign that the opal has split."



Miss Manchaser—"I admit that Mr Gaysport is rather wild, but I'm going to marry him to reform him."

Miss Pickles—"I don't think he's done anything bad enough to deserve that."

A Unique Description of a Man.

A little girl was asked to write an essay about man. The following was her composition:

"Man is a funny animal. He has eyes to see with, hands to feel with, and is split up the middle and walks on the split ends."

Pride Killed Him.

"He was always too proud. He has swallowed his pride."

"What has happened to him?"

"He's bu'sted."

"He might have known if he ever swallowed his pride it would bu'st him."

No Wonder He Was Afraid.

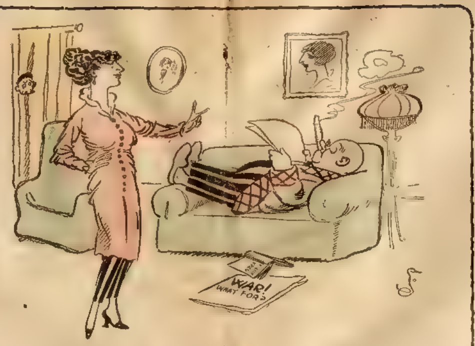
"Why would not Jiggs patronize the fortune teller? Was he afraid to have his fortune told?"

"Oh, no; he said he didn't care what he said about his future, but she threatened also to tell his past."

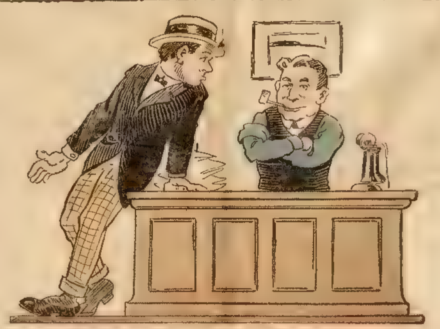
It All Depended.

"I wonder how many men will be made unhappy when I marry," said the flirt.

"How many do you expect to marry?" answered her dearest friend.


WAR! WHAT FOR?

Wife—"Listen, John! I have never loved you; and I have met my affinity!"
Husband—"You mean the chauffeur?"
Wife—"Yes, I mean the chauffeur."
Husband—"Well, wait till I can hang him up for two months' salary and then elope with him!"



Boggs—"Say, old chap, I'm completely strapped!"
Boggs—"That's funny! You haven't got much of an edge on!"

The Beggar's Plea.

Nat Goodwin declares that last spring he had occasion to turn down a persistent street beggar, and remonstrated with him on his laziness and his ragged clothes. The medicant drew himself up stiffly and replied:

"My pants may be ragged, sir, but they cover a warm heart."

A Maiden Hint.

He—"Would it be—er—proper if I placed a kiss on your hand?"

She—"I think it would be entirely out of place."

No Late Hours There.

Guest—"What possessed you to move away off here to the extreme edge of the city?"

Host—"The trolley cars stop running at ten p. m."

"What of that?"

"Wait till you see my pretty daughters."

Like a Gas Meter.

"But don't judge a man by appearance," said Mayor G. S. Marshall at a banquet in Columbus.

"Jackson Wentworth, after an absence of thirty years, returned to the home of his youth. Jackson had a slight affection of the skin, which made his nose very red. Hence, when he called at the parsonage the old minister remarked:

"'Jackson, Jackson, my man; I'm afraid you've become a hard drinker.'

"'Don't judge by appearance, Doctor Steenthly,' said Jackson Wentworth. 'I hardly average two glasses of beer a week.'

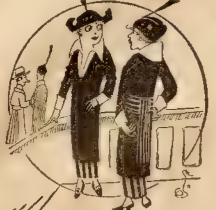
"'Well, then,' said the minister, in a soothing voice, 'I guess your face, Jackson, is like my gas meter. It registers more than it consumes.'"

A Fickle Girl.

Arthur (gloomily)—"I am afraid Mabel's love for me is cooling."

Friend—"Have you heard from her today?"

Arthur—"Yes, and here's her letter. She uses the word 'love' only sixteen times, and only underscores it ten."



Ethel—"Does Bob cut much ice with Dolly Jones?"

Martha—"Yes, but the cutting season is about over for Bobbie—they marry in two weeks."

Wise and Otherwise.

"It takes my wife so long to dress when we want to go to the city that we always miss the train," complained the first suburbanite. "How is your wife? I don't hear you kick much."

"My wife has a system that isn't so bad," said the second suburbanite. "She's so late for one train that she's generally on time for the next."

The Last Obstacle Removed.

Husband—"I think likely that the divided skirt will be generally adopted now."

Wife—"What have you learned?"

Husband—"The paper says that a Paris dressmaker has at last found a way to make it cost as much as the other kind!"

Feminine.

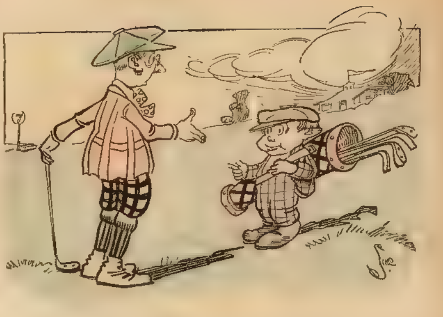
Mrs. Henpeck—"Is there any difference, Theodore, do you know, between a fort and a fortress?"

Mr. Henpeck—"I should imagine a fort-ress, my love, would be harder to silence."

Very Hateful.

Husband—"You don't appear to like Miss Sweetie."

Wife—"The horrid thing! I hate her! Next time we meet I'll kiss her only once, and I shan't ask after her baby."



The Man—"What will you charge to show me how to play golf?"
The Caddie—"Fifty cents an hour for de game and twenty-five cents extra for de language."

Worked Both Ways.

In a case tried in a Philadelphia court the prosecuting attorney had a good deal of fun at the expense of counsel for the defendant, each of whom seemed as stupid as the other.

"Ignorance of the law," interposed the judge at a certain juncture, "is no excuse for violation of law."

"May I inquire of your honor," asked the prosecuting attorney, "whether your honor's remarks are directed at the defendant or his counsel?"

Pays to Have Friends.

Jinks—"I tell you what it is, there is nothing like having lots of friends."

Winks—"I presume not."

Jinks—"No, siree. Just as quick as I lose a job my friends all rush around hunting a new place for me so as to save me the trouble of borrowing money from them."

On the Ocean, Too.

First Sailor—"There isn't a sign of a breeze anywhere, and we are right in the course of the trade winds, too."

Second Sailor—"My, my! I wonder if the trade winds have stopped on account of the tightness of the money market?"

Like All the Rest.

Mother—"Your husband is growing cold."

Daughter—"Mercy! Why do you think so?"

Mother—"He does not kiss me half so affectionately as he did before you were married."

Injustice.

Mr. Richfello—"What a peachy complexion Miss Beauti has!"

Rival Belle—"You do her injustice, really, Mr Richfello. Her face isn't so very fuzzy—except on her upper lip."

Married in Haste.

Neighbor—"The Widow Gay's marriage was rather sudden, wasn't it?"

Friend—"Yes; her daughter's baby was beginning to talk, and the widow wanted to have the wedding over before the kid learned to say 'grandma.'"

More Work for Lawyers.

Dora—"Edith married a very nice man, I hear."

Clara—"He's nice enough, but it won't be long before there will be a divorce in that family. He is cross eyed."

"What difference can that make?"

"She can never tell whether he is looking at her or some other woman."

In Quest of Information.

"I understand that you have called to ask for my daughter's hand?"

"Oh, no, nothing like that."

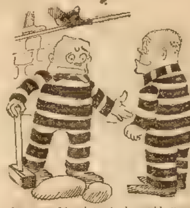
[illegible]

"She and I settled all that. What I have called for is to find out what part of the house you are going to turn over to us when we are married."

Not at Home

M[illegible]—"I wish to see Professor S[illegible], the astrologer. I wish to learn if tomorrow will be a lucky day for me to start on a journey."

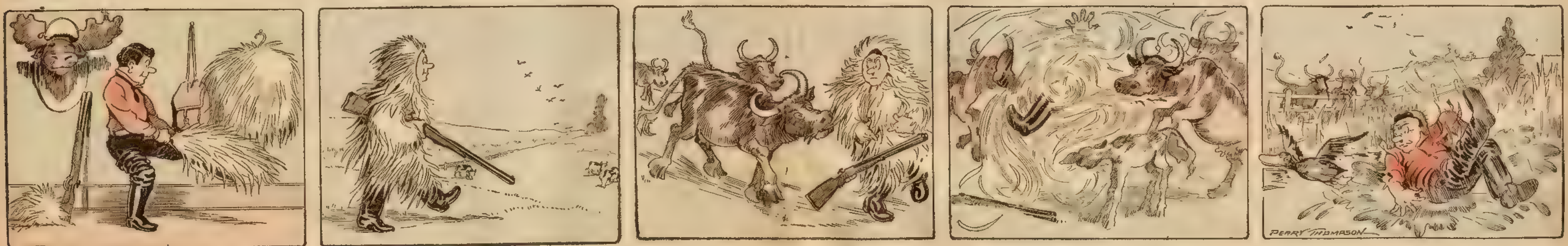
The Professor's Servant—"Very sorry, but the professor is dead. He was killed in a railroad accident."



Number 13—"I wish I could write a nice poem, Bill! De Govenor might pardon me if he thought I was a poet."

Number [illegible]—"For heaven's sake don't try it, Mike! Dis present Governor used ter be an editor!"

LUCKY FOR THE DUCKS



Nimrod Numskull—"When you're going for ducks there's nothing like these grass suits for a disguise!

"Aha! there seems to be plenty of ducks in that slough across the meadow!

"What the —— Get out, you brutes, d'ye take me for a haystack?

"Help! They're eating up my new grass hunting suit!

"Talk about hard luck! Here I'm right among the ducks without a gun or a disguise! Dodgast them potbellied grass eaters, anyhow!"

The Electric Flame.

(Continued from page eleven.)

very door of the building. He had fought the other newsies who trespassed on his territory. He had risen through crime, and now felt himself on a par, so far as personal merit went, with the big criminal inside. Branders had money; he had none. Therefore it was up to his "pal" to divide.

When the office boy called for his card, The Weasel was obliged to confess that he had none. He took up a sheet of paper, however, and wrote this message on it:

Bombay—January 20—English Hotel.
Madras—January 23—The Wharf.

To the office boy's great surprise, this queer legend gained instant admission to the king's office.

The Weasel found Branders with a bandaged chin and in anything but a welcoming mood. In fact, the big man was still in a panic of fear and rage at the strange power of the little Hindu. He was glad to get back at somebody, and he could understand The Weasel.

"So you put one over on me, you little skunk," began Branders with blazing eyes. "You took my money and then tossed up the job—and now you think I will 'come across' to your blackmailing scheme? Well, you're fooled. I can read your dirty little heart like a book. Get out of here. Go to the police with your story, if you want to. You'll never get another cent out of me, but you will get in jail if ever you show your face in this office again. Get out, before you are kicked out."

"So that's the lay, is it, boss?" said The Weasel, with an ugly light in his little rat eyes. "Well, you can't bluff me. You'll come across or you will be the sorriest man in Chicago. I give you two days. You think it over. I've got friends here, myself."

"Get out, dog!" Branders fairly bellowed.

He touched a button on his desk and The Weasel slipped away.

Almost instantly a private detective was at Branders' elbow—a member of his own staff, and one of the cleverest in [illegible]

"Quick, Burke—that little devil just leaving—tried to blackmail me—shadow him—find out who his friends are—get something on him—telephone."

"Right-o, Mr. Branders," cried Burke, as he fairly ran out of the office in time to see The Weasel walking rapidly toward Madison street.

The two men took the same westbound car, and they got off at the same street.

Thus The Wolf had set a fox on The Weasel's trail.

Burke had no difficulty in locating The Weasel at the cigar store of Mike, the Red. And he knew Mike of old.

The burglar did not know Burke, but he could tell a detective a block away merely by looking at his back.

Mike never blinked when Burke strolled into the place and bought a quarter's worth of cigars, but he knew the hounds of the law were on his trail for some reason or other. Perhaps they wanted The Weasel. Mike was not prepared to sacrifice his old pal, but he must know what was in the wind.

Now, the secret service of the underworld is as perfect in its way, and within its scope, as any in the world. Mike, as a householder and a gangster, was a valued lieutenant of a great West Side political boss. He had friends everywhere, even in the police department.

Mike's allies were ready to serve and support him, always with the understanding that if he got caught "with the goods" he was to "take his medicine" and not implicate them.

But Mike could not be arrested on suspicion. He could not have his house searched without warning. And his ready-made alibis were accepted in official circles without critical investigation.

Therefore Mike felt reasonably safe. But he did not like to have detectives snooping around the place. The prisoner in the hidden cellar was a menace.

STOP THAT ITCH WITH RESINOL!

There's a world of comfort for tortured skins in a warm bath with Resinol Soap and a simple application of that soothing, antiseptic Resinol Ointment! In a MOMENT all itching and burning are gone, healing begins, and soon the skin is free from its unsightly, tormenting eruption. Doctors everywhere prescribe Resinol freely and have done so for nineteen years, therefore it is not an experiment but a treatment of tested and proven value. Isn't that the kind of treatment YOU want?

Resinol Ointment (50c and $1.00) and Resinol Soap (25c) are also speedily effective for pimples, blackheads, dandruff and sores. Sold by all druggists. For trial free, write to Dept. F, Resinol, Baltimore, Md.

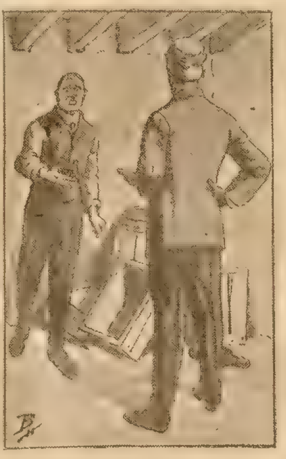
Mike was at the telephone almost before the detective was out of the door. A gangster lounged out of the corner saloon and followed Burke to Madison street. Another gangster took the car there. Burke was being shadowed and he did not know it.

Within an hour Mike knew the truth and put the case plainly to The Weasel.

"Branders has got detectives on your trail. His own private sleuth was in the store while you were upstairs. You know how I'm fixed. Until I can get rid of the dog I can't afford to have a raid here. They'll be framing up a charge on you, and you know what will happen then. John Branders is a relentless guy. He'll get you."

"He's bluffing, the big stiff!" said The Weasel, bitterly. "The fact that he sent the cop after me shows that he's scared. I'll beat him to it. What was the name of his detective?"

"Burke. What are you going to do?" asked Mike, as The Weasel sprang to the telephone.



"Mike will drop the gun."

"Hello! hello! give me blank, blankety-blank. Yes. Hello! I want to speak to Mr. Branders. No matter if he is busy. I want to speak to him. Tell him it's Bombay."

The Weasel held his hand over the mouthpiece. "Never mind, pal," he grinned reassuredly at Mike. "I won't get you in trouble."

"Hello, Branders. This is The Weasel. I'm astonished at your lack of sense. You put Burke on my trail, eh? Do you think that will get you anything? You're standing on dynamite, man. How about that clipping? How about that chin of yours? How about Crane? Don't you know the whole story is planted? If anything happens to me it all goes in the newspapers. Think it over, you big bluffer!"

"There, I guess that will hold him for a while," said The Weasel, as he hung up the receiver. "I'd like to see him now. I'll bet he's boiling over. That was a guess of mine about his chin. He's got it in a bandage, but my hunch is that there's a story of some sort in connection with it. You see it's this way, Mike. He's got a young wife that doesn't like him; but she does like Crane. He hires me to slip a knife into Mr. Crane."

Then The Weasel followed with the whole story.

"I guess you've got him on the anxious seat, all right, Weasel," said the astonished Mike. "You see, he doesn't know what has happened. He doesn't know whether you have sold out to Crane or not. He can't even solve the mystery of the newspaper clipping. And he's afraid to make any inquiries. He's got to sit tight and bluff it out, not being certain whether you're holding a full hand or a bob-tail. He'll come across."

"You bet he will," said The Weasel

But as he turned and looked through the window the triumphant grin died from The Weasel's thin face

"Well, for the love of Pete," he exclaimed. "Look who's here!"

Mike, the Red, glanced across the street and saw a foppish little Oriental swinging a cane as he sauntered toward the door of the shop.

"That's the Hindu," whispered The Weasel. "The valet of Crane. The fellow that put up the job on the newspaper. He's coming in. Sit tight, and let's see what he wants."

CHAPTER XX.

MIKE DECIDES TO REFORM.

THE Brahm Yogi strolled into the shop, and his glance passed idly over the two men. There was nothing to show that he recognized The Weasel.

"I want a box of Sphinxes—Egyptian Sphinxes," he said, as he leaned over the show cases.

"Never heard of them," said Mike. "I've got Deities, Irises, and Oases. Those are the only Egyptian cigarettes we carry."

"Sorry. I can't smoke those," said the Yogi. He sauntered toward the door, then turned back, swinging his cane.

"Might as well try the Deities, after all," he remarked. And while Mike was serving him the door opened and another customer came in.

It was Marcus Crane. He bought one of Mike's best cigars and stopped to light it at the little alcohol lamp swinging over the end of the cigar case.

"It's a small world," observed Crane, casually.

"It is indeed," said the Brahm Yogi "If Branders Sahib were here our little party would be complete."

"I just had him on the telephone," said The Weasel, with cool impudence. He felt comparatively safe from these two. If they had meant to punish him they would done it in Bombay. Their presence strengthened his position against Branders.

"Does he refuse to be blackmailed?" asked the Brahm Yogi politely.

"He does," answered The Weasel.

"Well that is not our affair, at present," said the Yogi. "We came to see Mike. We would like to take a look at his interesting cellar. I'd advise you not to move," he cautioned mildly, as he saw Mike's hand lowered.

Something in the man's tone caused Mike to hesitate.

"If you reach for that gun it will do you no good," continued the soft-spoken valet. "We're not policemen, you know. If you'll be reasonable, there's a chance for you to get out of town on the night train."

"I don't know what you're talking about," said the cautious Mike; "but I'm always willing to listen to any reasonable conversation."

"You are safe in following your—what you call it?—your 'hunch,' in this matter, brother," the valet said. "It is a curious thing, the criminal instinct," he observed, turning to Crane. "It is most highly developed. Our friend Mike, for instance, as well as our friend The Weasel, has developed a sixth sense in pursuing his highly interesting career. He has a hunch that we are all right, but his natural sense of caution holds him back. Is it not so, Mike?"

"I have a hunch," admitted Mike. "But let's hear in plain words what you want."

"We merely want you to lead us down into your cellar and release your prisoner. We propose to take him away. We have a limousine waiting, and there will not be any outcry on our part. You will be well rid of him, since the conscientious Kate objects to murder."

"Don't say anything against Kate, here, pardner. I won't stand for it."

"Your loyalty to Kate will save your soul, Mike," said the Hindu. "It is the best point about you. We are perfectly willing to call her to this conference. Are you?"

"Yes," said Mike promptly. "I am. Sometimes my hunches go wrong, but Kate's are always right."

He whistled three times through a speaking tube back of the counter, and Kate came down immediately. She looked very domestic in her white lawn house dress and sewing apron, especially as she brought her embroidery with her.

"Now, explain your proposition to Kate, and I'll do whatever she says," commanded Mike.

The Brahm Yogi went over the matter carefully. Kate weighed his words, but even more carefully she weighed his tone, the expression of his face.

"I am willing to take a chance on these gentlemen," said Kate.

"All right, come on," said Mike. "I'm the most reasonable man you ever saw when you play square with me. But I warn you not try any tricks. You come with us, Weasel. Mind the store, Kate."

Mike led the way into the basement, lifted the trapdoor, and the four men descended into the cellar.

When the light was turned on and Crane beheld the pitiable condition of the prisoner and realized that it was Mary's brother, a great and strange oath came to his lips.

"Easy, there, sahib," cautioned the Brahm Yogi. "What is done, is done. To the rescue, now."

"Take heart, my poor Carew, you are saved," said Crane, brokenly.

"Saved? Thank God!" said poor Thomas, and immediately fell to the floor in a faint.

"Unlock that fetter, you villain," cried Crane, and as Mike hesitated he grabbed the key out of the burglar's hand and began to fumble with the padlock.

"Easy, sahib, easy," said the Hindu. "Let us not become excited."

"Not excited!" exclaimed Crane, as he finally released the lock and flung the fetter aside; "not excited, when I see a decent man in this condition? My God, what villainy! Somebody'll suffer for this, I tell you."

"Somebody always suffers," said the Yogi. "That is the great law; but in this case punishment does not lie in our hands, sahib."

"I took it for granted that you men meant to be square," said Mike, the Red "If not, the game is in my hands yet. I'm not anxious to add a double murder to my career of crime, but by G I'll do it."

There was a cold gleam in the burglar's eyes. He whipped a revolver out of his pocket and covered the two men.

Crane was about to leap at Mike's throat, but when he started to move he felt a curious paralysis holding his feet to the earth. Mike, the Red, had also fallen under the Hindu's strange power. He looked at the gun in his hand and was appalled to see that it was being slowly twisted, as if there were some unseen giant gripping his wrist, until the automatic was pointed, not at Crane, but at the burglar's own heart.

"We must not have any violence," said Brahm Yogi, amiably. "Mike will drop the gun."

It was not spoken as a command but as a gentle suggestion, and the gun fell to the floor at the burglar's feet.

Poor Carew was still unconscious. Human courage could endure no more than he had endured. Crane swung the young man over his shoulder, and the others followed him upstairs.

When the emaciated man had been laid gently on the floor in the little room back of the shop he was revived by water and his clothing was put in a little order. He did not speak but looked at Crane appealingly

"Poor fellow, poor fellow; ain't it a shame?" murmured Kate, as she held a cup of milk to Carew's lips. "I didn't

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Stuart's Dyspepsia Tablets are the most wonderful tablets on earth for any kind of stomach trouble.

They enrich the gastric juices, and give the stomach the rest it needs before it can again be healthy and strong

Try one after your next meal, no matter what you eat. You'll find your appetite return for the meal after and you will feel fine after eating.

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know it was so bad. I'm glad you're taking him out of it. But don't be too hard on Mike. His heart was set on having that grand secret."

"Your secret desire to raise chickens is worth more to Mike than the secret of the Electric Flame," said the Brahm Yogi, as he helped Carew to his feet.

"You will find Chicago a poor dwelling-place, after this, Mike," he continued, turning gently to that unworthy citizen. "The world is large and there is honest work to be done. And while justice demands the last farthing in payment for crimes committed, the man who continues to increase his debt is most unwise. May the peace of God be with you both."

The limousine was at the door, now. They helped Carew into the big machine, closed it and rolled swiftly away.

"Now what do you think of that?" demanded Mike.

"He left the peace of God with us," said Kate, [illegible].

"Ain't that little man a wonder?" said The Weasel. "He could hypnotize an oak tree. I don't ever want to go up against him any more, as long as I live."

"Well, as for me and Kate, we are on the move. The little heathen sure got my goat. I'm going to take his tip. I don't feel as if I could ever have the nerve to take a jimmy in my hand again. Tony has offered me five thousand for this place, and I'll make him a deed this afternoon. That will buy us a little ranch, and we'll be decent citizens and go to church on Sundays. What do you say, old girl?"

"Oh, Mike, Mike, you make me so happy!" cried Kate, with her arms about his neck.

"Want to come with us?" asked Mike, a little later, when Kate had gone back upstairs to dress, so she could go out and sign the deed.

"No," said The Weasel, gloomily. "I ought to, but I can't. I've got to settle with that big bluffer. Either he'll come across with the coin, or I'll take it out of his carcass."

"Better let him alone," advised Mike.

"I can't, I tell you. There's something pulling me to toward him." The Weasel's little eyes brooded dangerously. "I don't like that man, and he don't like me. We've got to have it out."

Mike looked at his old pal curiously.

"I know how you feel, Weasel. Something fierce, ain't it, when that sort of thing get's to eating at you? You can't fight it. It gets your goat—it sure does. Sorry you can't give it up and come with us. If you ever need a lift, call on Mike."

"I will, thanks," said The Weasel. He pulled his hat over his eyes and made for the door. "Well, so long," he muttered, and went out.

Eastward to the river went The Weasel. He leaned over the bridge railing and gazed at the water a long time, brooding, brooding. He did not hear the rattle of the elevated overhead. He did not know it when pedestrians jostled him. At last a policeman woke him from his abstraction.

The Weasel shrugged his shoulders and straightened up, moving eastward toward the loop

"I got to have a knife," he muttered. "I don't know what I'll do with it—not yet But I simply got to have a knife. That man sure has got my goat. I'll never able to eat nor sleep till I have it out with him."

CHAPTER XXI.

LILLIAN GETS A VERBAL SPANKING.

MRS. CHESTER, so aptly described by the Brahm Yogi as "the grand mem-sahib with the two chins," did not know that Crane was living until she reached New York. She always kept in careful touch with the social doings of the day, and when she read that Mark had returned to Chicago she took the the first train back home, leaving New York before the receipt of Mary's letter or Branders' telegram.

She was determined to have it out with her daughter, and after the few words with Mary Carew in the hall, she went upstairs to Lillian's rooms without ceremony.

A maid tried to halt her at the door, with the plea that Mrs. Branders was ill and could see no one, not even her mother.

"Nonsense," said Mrs. Chester. "She could see her mother if she were dying. I am going in."

She found Lillian dressed in full mourning that heightened her ethereal fairness. The candles were burning at the "altar" in the corner of Lillian's room, and the young woman herself was seated there as at a shrine, gazing in ecstasy at Crane's photograph

"Lillian!" said Mrs. Chester.

But Lillian did not move; she might indeed have been deaf, so little attention did she pay to her mother's cry.

"This Ophelia business has got to stop, you little idiot," Mrs. Chester declared. "You are not half so crazed by love as you pretend to be. You need a good spanking"

She seized the photograph and tore it to pieces, and this rude piece of vandalism brought Lillian out of her dream.

"Mamma," she cried in dismay. "What are you doing? He was the only man I ever loved"

"Oh, piffle! You don't know what love is. You are only shamming. Don't I know it?"

"The only man I ever loved," repeated Lillian dolefully. " And his soul is crying out to me for vengeance. John had him murdered, and now, you——"

"Lillian! He wasn't murdered. He's here in Chicago, now. And much good will it do you. You know the man doesn't care a rap for you. What makes you such a fool?"

"What do you mean? He is living?" cried Lillian. She was not posing now, at any event, as she seized her mother by the shoulders. "Tell me the truth."

"That is the truth, Lillian. The clipping you have was a mistake—or worse. Maybe it was a scheme of John's to cure you of your silly infatuation. Maybe it was an honest mistake. What does it matter? Mark Crane is alive and well and here in Chicago. You are grieving uselessly, making a wreck out of yourself for nothing. He doesn't love you. If you were free today he would run away from you again. You simply bore him, and when a woman makes a man weary, her case is hopeless. Why can't you see that, and pull yourself together like a woman of sense? Do you want to be locked up in a madhouse?"

"Oh, John wouldn't dare to do that!" exclaimed Lillian in genuine dismay.

"He certainly will, and I will help him, if you don't stop this foolishness," said Mrs. Chester. "You're either pretending, or else you are crazy, Lillian. I declare I don't know myself which it is. But if you're pretending, you soon will be crazy, if you keep it up. So it's safest to put you where you will be taken care of and not disgrace your friends."

Lillian was weeping now, and Mrs. Chester took the girl in her arms.

"Oh, mamma, don't let them lock me up," she begged. "I will be good. I will control myself, I promise you. Take me away somewhere. I can't stand it any longer."

"Very well, if you'll show me you have some sense I'll take you away tomorrow. Now, yank off that hideous mockery of mourning. Sweep this Crane trash out of sight and out of mind. If you're really not mad you can act sensibly. That's all I ask."

"Very well, mamma, I will," she promised.

The knowledge that Crane was living, aided by her mother's threat, had acted upon Lillian like a glass of cold water on a hysterical person. Meekly and shamefacedly she laid aside her mourning and put on a pretty blue frock. Then she cleared away her "altar." She did not have the heart just yet, at least, to throw her mementos away, but she put them in her dresser, smiling a little even as she sighed.

She went down to dinner that night with her mother, and was secretly glad that her terrible husband did not appear. He was not feeling well, and would have dinner in his room, a servant reported.

Mrs. Chester secured an interview with Branders next morning before he left the house, and she read the riot act to him much as she had done to her daughter. She was too wise to go sniveling and pleading to Branders.

"I am going to take Lillian away," she concluded. "She's been acting the fool, of course, but I think now she will show a little sense. She needs a change."

"She hasn't had anything but change since I married her," he protested.

"True enough John. Oh, I understand what you've had to put up with. She's been making a tragedy out of nothing. She dramatizes herself. But I've got to take her away, for a time at least."

"Very well," he said sullenly. "Take her wherever you please. I've got enough on my mind without having to bother with her, just now. I can't stand it any longer. She can get a divorce and marry Crane if she wants to."

"She doesn't want to. And Crane is not a bit in love with her. I know that."

"Nevertheless, he was in the park talking confidentially to Lillian's maid for an hour yesterday. That was the maid you met going out, with the nigger. I sent her packing. I'm not going to have spies in the house if I know it."

"Well, I'll take good care of her, John. You may be sure she'll not see him nor hear from him while she's with me. Your marriage was a mistake, I'm afraid. But you are not to blame for that. I should have known better. I tell you, I'm glad that Crane is living. You know I was mighty suspicious of you when I thought he had been assassinated at Bombay. I was afraid you were in some way responsible."

"H'mph!" he muttered.

"So I'm thankful he's living, because it clears my mind of an unjust thought. I am sorry for you, John. I hope Lillian will come to her senses and quit moping, and that you will be happy yet."

She gave him her hand.

"We will leave tonight, and I'll let you know how we get along. It's just as well you don't see her till we come back. Good-by, John."

"Good-by," he grumbled. "Draw on me when you need funds. That's about all I amount to in this family—I'm the purseholder."

That night the two women left for California. All the servants except the butler and the cook, who happened to be the butler's wife, were dismissed and all the rooms were closed except the master's library and his sleeping quarters. He arranged to take his meals at the club.

This thrilling story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

Hardly Noticed It.

The limited express tore madly along through midnight darkness. Suddenly the engineer sprang to the lever and set the brakes. The sparks flew from the rails as the locked wheels slid along with a cry as of pain. The lights were extinguished as car after car toppled from the rails. Then came a shuddering silence more terrible than the harsh grating of iron on steel.

Some passengers made torches from fragments of wreckage and searched for dead and injured. A sound singularly like a snore issued from a pile of debris. Hastily removing several pieces of twisted iron, they dragged forth a slumbering porter.

"Good heavens!" they exclaimed. "Didn't you know there had been a wreck?"

"Well, gemmum, I sho' felt somethin', but I done thought we was couplin' on de dinin' cah at Jackson."

* * *

Catching Father.

This is a fresh example of the fashion in which the youth of today trips the unwary parent:

"Father," said the son home from college to his father, "I must have better rooms at college. Why, in the place I room now there isn't even hot water to shave with in the morning."

"Son, when I was your age I never had hot water to shave with. Did it when the weather wasn't too blooming cold out in front of the woodshed and made lather out of any old soap I could find."

"But, father," expostulated the son, "didn't you say you sent me to college that I might have the advantages you didn't have?"

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If you suffer from bleeding, itching, blind or protruding Piles, send me your address, and I will tell you how to cure yourself at home by the new absorption treatment; and will also send some of this home treatment free for trial, with references from your own locality if requested. Users report immediate relief and speedy cures. Send no money, but tell others of this offer. Write today to Mrs. M. Summers, Box 457, South Bend, Ind.

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LADIES $1000 REWARD! positively guarantee my great Successful "Compound." Safely relieves some of the longest, most obstinate, abnormal affections in 3 to 5 days. No harm, pain or interference with work. Mail $1.50; Double Strength, $2.00. BOOKLET FREE. Write today **DR. C. L. SOUTHINGTON REMEDY CO., 515 MAIN ST., KANSAS CITY, MO**

CROWN YOUR TEETH with our gold finished shells and fool your friends. Great fad; resembles dentists' work. Slips over the tooth; easily adjusted; removed at will. Over two million sold. Thousands of pleased customers. Price 10c each; 4 for 25c or 12 for 50c. C. B. FARGO, Dept. U FRENCHTOWN, N. J.

LOTS OF MAIL If you want to get lots of mail from different firms—Send us your name and address—and we will put your name in our Directory. And we will also send you at once, 12 sample Cards, 14 fine Pictures, and a large assortment of curious and wonderful reading matter. Write today, send 10 cents, coin or stamps for postage; and you will get lots of mail—and the big lot of presents besides. Williams & Co. 326 Madison St., Chicago

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A Fortune Knocking at Your Door.

UNCLAIMED WEALTH.

Heirs Wanted at Once.
This May Mean YOU.

Thousands of families are wanted to claim fortunes. Many now living in poverty are Rich and don't know it. Our 400 page cloth bound book, entitled: NEXT OF KIN, contains authentic lists of unclaimed estates and heirs wanted and advertised in America and abroad to claim fortunes. There are thousands of names in this book. Also contains Chancery Court of England and Ireland list, and Bank of England unclaimed dividend list. Thousands of names in book. Your ancestors' name may be among them. We want every family in the U. S. and Canada to have this book. Send $1.00 to cover cost compiling this 400 page book and we will mail it to you at once, postpaid, or, send two cents in postage for circular.

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To advertise our business, make new friends and introduce our catalogue of Watch bargains we will send this elegant R. R. style watch by mail post paid **ONLY 98 CENTS.** Gentlemen's size, full nickel silver plated case, locomotive on dial, lever escapement, stem wind and stem set, a perfect timekeeper and fully guaranteed for 5 years. Send this advertisement to us with **98 CENTS** and watch will be sent by mail post paid. Satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded. Send 98 cents today. Address **R. E. CHALMERS & CO., 538 So. Dearborn St., CHICAGO.**

FREE 2 Full Qts. Riley's Flag Staff Whiskey

To introduce our Celebrated PRAIRIE ROSE and Famous FLAG STAFF WHISKIES to the readers of this paper, we will give, FREE OF CHARGE, 2 FULL QUARTS of the FLAG STAFF with shipment of 4 FULL QUARTS PRAIRIE ROSE.

All Express Charges Prepaid

4 Full Quarts RILEY'S PRAIRIE ROSE $3.60

2 Full Quarts RILEY'S FLAG STAFF Worth $3.00 FREE

We will ship the above 6 Full Quarts for $3.60 with the understanding that if the whiskey is not perfectly satisfactory, after you have tried it, you may return same at our expense, and your money will be refunded. Reference, Stock Yards National Bank, Kansas City, Mo.

Order at once, as this offer may be open only a short time. Cut out and return this ad with your order. Send remittance to W. R. Riley, or

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Stock Yards Station Department 1 Kansas City, Mo.

Persons living in Florida, North Dakota and New Mexico add 40c to help cover expressage. Those living west of the Rocky Mountains add 80c to help cover expressage.

RILEY'S FLAG STAFF WHISKEY

CLASSIFIED WANT ADS

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FORD AUTOMOBILE GIVEN AWAY FREE to a few alert, ambitious and up-to-date salesmen who will represent us with our line of art calendars for the coming season. Liberal commissions. Compact and attractive outfit. Write for our plan at once. Frank J. Offermann Art Works, 299-303 Broadway, Buffalo, N. Y

WHO ARE YOU? PROVE IT AT BANKS, etc., by photo-identification credential (in fine leather pocketbook) furnished with $2,000 accident insurance policy; pays benefits for injuries or sickness, total cost $5 per year; double benefits $10. Agents wanted. Highest commissions. Address Underwriters, 1346 Insurance Exchange, Chicago.

SALESMEN CLEAR $14.00 ON EACH ORder for our punchboard deals. Address Behrend Bros., 4347 Adams St., Chicago.

SIDE LINE—ANY ONE WHO TRAVELS TO small towns, any district, can earn $60.00 to $80.00 per month, without a cent of expense, appointing boy agents to handle our papers; known everywhere, national circulation. Only takes a few minutes to pick out a boy. You'll find it refreshing to have nothing to sell. Very liberal proposition. Send us list of towns you make, address, etc., and we will send complete particulars. Boy Department, Dearborn and Illinois, Chicago.

AGENTS WANTED

AGENTS—NEW, MIGHTY, MONEY-MAKing Marvel. World startled. New, marvelous clothes washing crystal. Clothes washing ideas revolutionized; positively abolishes rubbing, washboards, washing machines. Women astounded, wild over it. Absolutely harmless; $1,000 guarantee goes with it. $50 to $125 weekly; repeat order business easy. Exclusive territory; no experience necessary, credit granted. Magic silver cleaner, polisher, big profits. Nature's mighty elements do the work. Write today; get overwhelming proof, all free. Equitable Sales Corporation, Dept. B, Manhattan Bldg., Chicago, Ill

FATTEN YOUR POCKETBOOK, AND SELL the two fastest selling novelties on the market. Midget collapsible clothes hanger can be carried in vest pocket and instant heatless trouser presser. Enormous profits. Both samples sent prepaid for only 50c. Satisfaction positively guaranteed or your money refunded. Faam Novelty Co., 264 Monadnock Block, Chicago.

YOUR SHOES CAN'T LEAK; THEY WILL wear longer than three pairs if you use "Shoe-Balm," instructions and formula, 25c. Manufacture yourself, sell friends, stores; we furnish sample, labels, circulars, everything ready start factory. Shoe-Balm Co., 519½ Belden Ave., Chicago.

AGENTS SELL RICH LOOKING IMPORTED 36x68 rugs $1 each. Carter, Tenn., sold 115 in 4 days, profit $57. You can do same. Write for sample offer selling plan; exclusive territory. Sample rug by parcel post prepaid 98c. Condon, Importer, Box 1, Stonington, Maine.

400 PER CENT PROFIT. EVERGRIP gliders. No rollers. Pocket samples free. Any one can attach. Cost 3c sell 15c. Homes buy dozens, hotels hundreds. Save floors and carpets. S. Mfg. Co., 20 J, Warren St., New York, N. Y.

OUTFIT FREE TO AGENTS. BEST SELLing handkerchiefs, dress goods and fancy goods on the market. Quick sellers, big profits. Deal direct with a large manufacturer. Send stamp for particulars. Freeport Mfg. Co., 52 Main St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

MAN OR WOMAN OF GOOD CHARACTER in each town to distribute free goods as advertising; experience unnecessary; references required; $15 a week to start. Address Hudson, King & Co., Dept. C, 9 South Clinton St., Chicago.

AGENTS — SALARY OR COMMISSION. Greatest seller yet. Every user pen and ink buys on sight. 200 to 500 per cent profit. One agent's sales $620 in six days; another $32 in two hours. Monroe Mfg. Co., X 96, La Crosse, Wis.

AGENTS—IF YOU MAKE LESS THAN $1 per hour write us; send stamp; we manufacture new household necessity; it's cheap, sells fast; not sold in stores. M. H. Tyler Mfg. Co., 2466 Main St., Muncie, Indiana.

OUR NECKTIE PROPOSITION BEATS them all. Wonderful bargain combinations with free premiums to customers. Big profits; outfit furnished; act quick. J. M. Grove Co., Box 503, Frederick, Md. (Est. 1901).

AGENTS WANTED—WRITE FOR CATALOG A and make $25 to $75 handling our photo enlargements. We extend credit and furnish samples free. Lyman Brothers, Indianapolis, Ind.

WILL PAY RELIABLE MAN OR WOMAN $12.50 to distribute 100 free pkgs. perfumed borax soap powder among friends. No money required. B. W. Ward and Company, 218 Institute Place, Chicago.

AGENTS—500 PER CENT PROFIT; GOLD and silver sign letters for store and office windows. Any one can put on. Write today for free sample. Metallic Letter Co., 416 N. Clark, Chicago.

AGENTS—MAKE $10.00 A DAY SELLING rugs at $1.00 each, cost agents 55 cents. Size 36x68 inches, sell from one to six at each house. Sample rug by parcel post 98 cents. Commerce Specialty Co., Commerce, Texas.

AGENTS ARE MAKING BIG MONEY SELLing Christmas post cards in packages. Send 10c for sample package and instructions. Post Card Distributing Co., Dept. A, 725 Arch St., Philadelphia.

AGENTS—SNAPPIEST HOUSEHOLD LINE on Earth. Red hot sellers, steady repeaters. Goods guaranteed. Over 100% profit. Write quick—hurry. E. M. Feltman, Sales Manager, 513 Third St., Cincinnati, Ohio.

AGENTS—SOMETHING NEW. ARTICLE every housewife needs. Quick seller. Every home a prospect. Big money. Sample 10c. Elmonica Specialty Co., 6900 Lakewood Ave., Chicago.

WANTED—BOYS TO SELL THE BLADE and LEDGER. People in every town in the United States want some boy they can depend on to deliver to them those two great papers each week. You get two cents out of each nickel you take in. You don't send us money until you sell the papers, you can return heads of unsold papers, so you pay for only what you sell. You can earn $1.00 to $5.00 per week for a few hours' work on Saturday. Get a Paper Route of your own, before some other boy Beats You To It. W. D. Boyce Company, 502 No. Dearborn Street, Chicago.

AGENTS WANTED—(Continued).

RELIABLE MEN AND WOMEN MAKE money in spare time distributing premium packages perfumed starch wax; no money or experience required. Williams & Co., Dept. 58, Montclair, N. J.

AGENTS — WONDERFUL SAFEGUARD against forgery, great demand; repeater; wanted by every business man. Sample and particulars 25c silver. P. S. Bixler, Westminster, Md

AGENTS AND VACUUM CLEANER MEN—Get this—a new machine—sells quick at low price—commissions big. Write now. Standard Vacuum Cleaner Co. (not inc.), 1128 B, Newport Ave., Chicago.

AGENTS—EUROPEAN WAR BOOK, RIGHT up-to-date. Big money maker. Outfit free. 50% commission. National Bible House, 700 Pope Bldg., Chicago.

MAKE $30 WEEK SELLING LADIES' handbag; just the thing for holidays; write quick. Nichols Specialty Co., Whitehall, N. Y.

AGENTS—MONEY MADE EASY SELLING self-threading needles—everybody buys. Write for territory and free sample. Budke Company, University City, Mo.

AGENTS—YOU CAN SELL MADE-TO-ORder Raincoats. You need no money. Free Outfit. Temple Raincoat Co., Box 175, Templeton, Mass

SEND ADDRESS. MAKE $25 WEEKLY selling fur sets and made to measure skirts. Jos. Besner, Manufacturer, 460 Broome St., New York, N. Y.

WE PAY $36 A WEEK AND EXPENSES TO men with rigs to introduce poultry compound. Year's contract. Imperial Mfg. Co., Dept. 67, Parsons, Kan.

FIRST DOZEN FREE TO AGENTS, MEN, women, demonstrate 25c household article Quick seller, exclusive territory, constant repeater. B. L. King, Coudersport, Pa.

AGENTS—PROFITABLE HOME EMPLOYment. Special inducements. Pay weekly. Address Perry Nurseries, Rochester, N. Y

HELP WANTED

MEN OF IDEAS AND INVENTIVE ABILITY should write for new "Lists of Needed Inventions," "Patent Buyers" and "How to Get Your Patent and Your Money." Advice free. Randolph & Co., Patent Attorneys, Dept. 11, Washington, D. C.

$65.00 TO $150 MONTH PAID MEN AND women. Government life jobs. Common education sufficient. 2,000 appointments every month. Write immediately for free list of positions. Franklin Institute, Dept. N 30, Rochester, N. Y.

I HAVE A CONTRACT TO DISTRIBUTE A million free packages borax soap powder. Want reliable men and women to help. $15.00 weekly A. Waverly Brown, 730 N. Franklin St., Chicago.

SONG POEMS WANTED. WE WILL COMpose music and arrange for publication immediately. Dugdale Co. Studio 1204, Washington, D. C.

WE PAY 25C EACH FOR FARMERS' names. Send dime for contract. Sun, Leroy, Mich.

SILVERING MIRRORS, PLATING TABLEware, auto-brass home. Booklet-plans free. Clarence Sprinkle, E-Grant, Marion, Ind.

MALE HELP WANTED

FREE ILLUSTRATED BOOK TELLS OF about 300,000 protected positions in U. S. service. Thousands of vacancies every year. There is a big chance here for you, sure and generous pay, lifetime employment. Just ask for booklet S-1034. No obligation. Earl Hopkins, Washington, D. C.

I WANT A RELIABLE MAN IN EACH county to give away premiums advertising Rodgers 20 year silverware. Pay $52 monthly, also commission. Chance for advancement. A. A. Cline, Advertising Manager, 806 Rodgers Building, Philadelphia.

BE OUR DETECTIVE, EXPERIENCED OR unexperienced; we appiont if mutually agreeable; send 55c money order for methods. Reliable; not a school; money returned if misrepresented. Revelare International Detective Service, Brooks Arcade, Salt Lake, Utah.

$10 PER 100 UPWARD PAID TACKING signs, distributing booklets, samples, etc. Send 6c stamps for price list paid secure territory. Shepard's Distributing Agency, Lebanon, N. H.

GOVERNMENT RAILWAY MAIL, POST office, rural carrier "exams" everywhere soon. Get prepared by former Government civil service examiner. Booklet free. Arthur Robert Patterson, Rochester, N. Y.

FIREMEN AND BRAKEMEN; $100 MONTHly; experience unnecessary; hundreds needed by the best railroads everywhere; particulars free. 686 Railway Bureau, East St. Louis, Ill.

BE A DETECTIVE; EARN $50 TO $100 weekly; travel all over the world. Write Dept. 115, United States Detective & Adjusting Agency, Railway Exchange, St. Louis, Mo.

RAILWAY MAIL CLERKS, CLERK-CARriers and rural carriers wanted. I conducted examinations—can help you. Trial examination free. Ozment (k), St. Louis

$80 MONTHLY AND EXPENSES TO TRAVel, distribute samples and take orders, or appoint agents; permanent. Jap American Co., Chicago.

I MADE $50,000 IN FIVE YEARS WITH A small mail order business; began with $5. Send for free booklet. Tells how. Heacock, Box 757, Lockport, N. Y.

AN INTELLIGENT PERSON MAY EARN $100 monthly corresponding for newspapers. No canvassing. Send for particulars. Press Syndicate, 917, Lockport, N. Y.

BE A DETECTIVE—EARN $25 TO $75 weekly; chance to see the world with all expenses paid. Loraine System, Dept. 312, Boston, Mass

FEMALE HELP WANTED

A RARE OPPORTUNITY MAKE COMFORTable living home sewing plain cloth seams Any sewing machine. Steady. No canvassing. No triflers reply. Send 10c for samples, etc. Returned if not satisfactory. Home Sewers Co., Jobbers' Sewing, R. L., Rehoboth, Delaware.

DO YOU WANT ANOTHER $2 DAILY? NO experience; constant spare time work, knitting hosiery; machines furnished on contract; we take product. Helping Hand Stores (Inc.) Dept. 904, Chicago.

FEMALE HELP—(Continued)

LADIES: MAKE SHIELDS AT HOME. $10 per 100. No canvassing required. Send stamped-addressed envelope for full particulars. Eureka Co Dept. 17, Kalamazoo, Mich

MISSOURI FARMS

GRAPE AND STRAWBERRY FARMS IN Sunny South Missouri are an actual success beyond question. Not a new and untried proposition, but sure and steady money producers The long laying and breeding season in this mild climate makes poultry extremely profitable also. 10 acres in well settled locality where fruit and poultry farms abound for $250, $5 monthly. No interest. No forfeiture. You cannot lose on our plan. Literature free. Merriam, Ellis, Benton, 327 Victor Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

OIL LANDS FOR SALE

$1 MAY START YOUR FORTUNE. MILLions of dollars being made in Texas Oil Belt near Houston, where we are now drilling big co-operative well. Oil lots 25x100 feet in this subdivision only $1 cash, $1 monthly. Price $30. You get deed to lots and share in profits from well which may be gusher paying $3,000 or more daily. Similar lots have brought $5,000 to $10,000 when wells developed. Write quick for maps and literature telling about new plan. C. A. Bryan & Co., Owners, 266 First Nat'l Bank Bldg., Houston, Texas

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

FREE FOR SIX MONTHS—MY SPECIAL OFfer to introduce my magazine, "Investing for Profit." It is worth $10 a copy to any one who has been getting poorer while the rich, richer. It demonstrates the real earning power of money, and shows how any one, no matter how poor, can acquire riches. "Investing for Profit" is the only progressive financial journal published. It shows how $100 grows to $2,200. Write now and I'll send it six months free. H. L. Barber, 453, 28 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago.

WANTED—NAMES AND ADDRESSES. ALL kinds. We pay 25c each. Send dime for contract. Directory, 9460 Cottage Grove Ave., Chicago.

MEN OF KEEN BUSINESS JUDGMENT wanted to represent us in each locality. Good pay Send 25c for proposition National Aid and Location Bureau, Spray, N C.

EVERY READER OF THE LEDGER OUGHT to read these ads. Every week splendid chances to make money—to better yourself—to buy, sell, or exchange goods or services, are offered here.

MOTION PICTURE PLAYS

WRITE MOVING PICTURE PLAYS; $50.00 each; all or spare time; experience or correspondence course unnecessary. Details free. Atlas Publishing Co., 344, Cincinnati, Ohio.

A COURSE IN PHOTOPLAY WRITING free. Send us your name at once. Enterprise Co., CL-1102 Morton Bldg., Chicago.

HONEY.

BEST QUALITY NEW CLOVER HONEY, 30 pound can $3.45, two or more cans $3.30 each. Sample 10cts. Price List Free. M. V. Facey, Preston, Minn.

FOR THE HOUSEHOLD

PHOTO PILLOW TOPS, PINK, BLUE, white and yellow sateen, $1.00; satin or silk, $2.00, silk, white only. Orders filled in about two weeks. Photos returned. Foster's Photo Shop, Bridgeport, Ill.

MONEY TO LOAN

6 PER CENT MONEY 6 PER CENT MONEY 6% loans may be obtained for any purpose on acceptable real estate security; liberal privileges; correspondence solicited. A. C. Agency Company, 758 Gas, Electric Bldg., Denver, Colo.; 446 Pierce Bldg., St. Louis.

SONG POEMS

SONG WRITERS. WE WANT BALLADS, instrumental numbers, patriotic, novelty and love songs for immediate publication. Submit words only or with music complete, or write for our valuable free booklet setting forth the fairest, most liberal proposition offered. Established 1897. Many successes. Have paid writers thousands in royalties; protection guaranteed. John T. Hall, Pres., 3 Columbus Circle, New York City.

OLD COINS WANTED.

$50 PAID FOR HALF DOL. 1853 NO ARrows; $5 for 1878 Half S. Mint; $100 for 1894 Dime S. Mint. Many valuable coins circulating. Get posted. Send 4c. Get our Illus. Coin Circular. It may mean large profits to you. Send now. You have nothing to lose. Numismatic Bank, Dept. 12, Fort Worth, Texas.

RESORTS

FURNISHED ROOMS FOR LIGHT HOUSEkeeping at Cortez, Florida's great fishing resort. Terms reasonable. Address Mrs. J. C. Flowers, Cortez, Fla.

FOR THE HOUSEHOLD

25C TO US OR DRUGGIST, BUYS BOTtle Dr. Lee's liniment; never failing cure for sore throat, bronchitis, croup, tonsilitis, deep-seated coughs, colds, inflamed glands, whooping cough. The family's physician; 75 years' success. Snap for agents. Trial order inducements. Persian Balm Co., 403 Federal St., Pittsburgh, Pa.

PRINTING

KEWPIE PARTY INVITATIONS—THE LATest. 24 complete sets 60c. Ritzmann, Brookes & Co., Chicago.

FOR POLISHING

METAL POLISHING CLOTH POLISHES instantly. Lasts indefinitely. Once used, always used. Sample 10c. The Bottomley Co., Box 15, Hoxsie, R. I.

CYCLECARS

"IMP" CYCLECARS AT INTRODUCTORY price. Get details. W. H. McIntyre Co., Dept. B., Auburn, Ind.

PATENTS

WANTED, AN IDEA! WHO CAN THINK OF some simple thing to patent? Protect your ideas, they may bring you wealth. Write for "Needed Inventions," "Patent Buyers," and "How to Get Your Patent and Your Money." Randolph & Co., Patent Attorneys, Dept. 174, Washington, D. C.

MEDICAL

WANTED—ALL PERSONS SUFFERING with lung trouble to write for particulars and learn about the new lung builder. Childs Rubber Co., Akron, Ohio.

MISCELLANEOUS

THIS DEPARTMENT WANTS TO [illegible] Blade readers. Your ad here will reach more than 6,000,000 people. Cost is $4.20 for 14 words and 30c for each additional word, cash with order, including Chicago Ledger.

HABITS—ANY KIND—QUICKLY OVERcome—New methods. Gladly send particulars. Relief Society, Mohawk, Florida

4 FASCINATING POSES OF BEAUTIFUL women kind men like, 25c. Box 592, Minneapolis, Minn.

I HAVE THE CREAM OF RARE BOOKS, catalogue free. M. Collins, Box 93, Appleton, Wis

PERSONAL

LONELY YOUNG WIDOW AGE 21, WEIGHT 135, owns nice comfortable home, 320 acres fine t wheat land, near Pacific coast, worth $30,000. Income $3,000 yearly, also large bank account, good disposition, easy to get along with, will marry poor man if bright, honorable, ambitious and capable of managing property successfully. More particulars for any man answering quick, enclosing some postage. Address "Sincere," B 420, Farmingdale, S. D. (General deliveries not answered). This notice is genuine.

SALCURA BATH DE LUXE, LAKE OF Mystery's wonderful mineral production strengthens women and men. Ends all skin irritations and eruptions; relieves rheumatism; purifies blood. Brings "healing waters" of nature's springs to your home. Free booklet. Salcura Co., 389 Mfrs. Home Bldg., Milwaukee, Wis.

MARRY—MANY WEALTHY MEMBERS. Will marry. All ages. Directory with photos and descriptions free. Pay if suited. New plan. Dept. 27, 1228 Grand Ave., Kansas City, Mo

MARRY FOR WEALTH AND HAPPINESS. Hundreds rich, attractive, congenial and willing to wed. Interesting literature, testimonials, descriptions and photos Free! (Reliable—21st year). The Messenger, Jacksonville, Fla.

FORTUNE TOLD — EVERY PERSON should learn their future—instructive, valuable reading—send dime, stamped envelope, birth date—L. LeNor, 2821 Charlotte, Kansas City, Mo

RED FACES, FLUSHING, BURNING OF the face, easily cured, $1, mailed in plain wrapper. Box 850, Buffalo Herb Co., Buffalo, N. Y.

ACNE ERUPTIONS; RED NOSE; WORST cases permanently cured — disfigurement completely removed. Booklet free. Doctor Rodgers, 36 West Randolph St., Chicago.

FREE—ARE YOU NERVOUS, WEAK, LACKing vigor? Then send for free proving package Her-cu-lin, powerful nerve invigorator. Oswald Co., 358 M, West 42nd St., New York.

STOP TOBACCO WITHOUT HARMFUL drugging. Quickly — Secretly — Pleasantly. Interesting booklet free. Ben Bradford, Asheville, N. C.

MARRY—THOUSANDS WEALTHY, ANXious for early marriage; description free. Confidential. 268 Market St., San Francisco, Calif

MARRY RICH—BIG LIST OF DESCRIPtions and photos of congenial people with means FREE. Sealed. Either sex. Standard Cor. Club, Grayslake, Illinois.

MARRY—MARRIAGE DIRECTORY WITH photos and descriptions free. Pay when married. The Exchange, Dept. 38, Kansas City, Mo.

MARRIAGE PAPER WITH PHOTOS AND descriptions of ladies and gents, many rich, want to marry. Free. H. Jahn, St. Paul, Minn.

HAVE FRIENDS AND SWEETHEARTS EVerywhere. Receive postcards from every place. Membership 10c. Hoosier Club, Terre Haute, Ind.

FORTUNE TOLD. SEND STAMPED-ADdressed envelope, birth date and three questions. Betta Lane, Bevier, Mo.

ART POSES, RARE IMPORTED MODELS, samples and catalog, 10c. Girard Novelty Co., Pawtucket, R. I.

MARRIAGE PAPER FREE; BEST PUBlished for sure results; reliable. Eastern Agency 65, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

FUTURE TOLD; ALSO PAST; SEND DIME, birth date. A. B. Fay, 5730 Madison St., Chicago.

GET MARRIED—BEST MATRIMONIAL PAper published. Mailed Free. The Correspondent (i), Toledo, Ohio.

LOVINE NEVER FAILS. EVERY PACKAGE guaranteed. Either sex. 10c. Two packages sealed, 20c. Union, Box 100, Palatine, Ill.

MARRY RICH—HUNDREDS ANXIOUS TO marry. Descriptions and photos free (sealed). The Unity, Grand Rapids, Mich

LOVERS' SACHET WINS YOUR SWEETheart without delay. Powder and its "SECRET" 25c. Britt's, Stone St., Newark, N. J.

MARRIAGE PAPER; HIGHEST CHARACter; sealed; send 10c. B. W. Love, Box 1600, Denver, Colo.

MARRY—CATALOGUE WITH PHOTOS AND descriptions free. Pay if suited. Select Club, Dept. 674, Tekonsha, Mich.

OF INTEREST TO MOTHERS

MOTHERS—SEND FOR OUR FREE BOOK, "How to Train Your Boy to Make Money," written by a big-hearted man who has started more boys on the road to success than any other one in America. It tells—how to train your boy to be manly and independent—how to earn regular weekly salary—how to get his own clothes—how to handle money and accounts accurately—how to run a little business—It's free. Simply state your boy's name and age and the book will be sent. M. Siddall, 52 W. Illinois Street, Chicago.

FOR FAMILY HONOR

Or, A WORLD WIDE SEARCH

By AUGUSTIN W. BREEDEN AND DR. H. L. SMITH

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Begun in No. 45, November 7. Subscriptions can begin with that issue or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER XIV.

TREASON IN THE RANKS.

HARRY HASKELL sat long by his little, shimmering fire that night, thinking, thinking. Here he was at last in possession of enough money at least partly to vindicate his father's honor, and yet he was absolutely powerless to transmit it to him. He was well-nigh driven mad by the thought of his own helplessness. He could get no message off this island. It was even doubtful if he himself would ever get off alive. And he had many things on his mind to worry about. Where were Billy and Beatrice? How had they fared at the hands of the enemy? Would they ever know the fate of the Island Queen, or would they die believing that he, Harry Haskell, had deserted them like a coward in their hour of need? And worst of all, what if he and the other five perished there on that lone reef? Would his old father ever know what an effort he had made to find the villain who had ruined them? Would his father die there in the prison, and would poor Daisy Wentworth die also of a broken heart? His all-night musings left him determined upon one thing. He would rig out the lifeboat with what scraps of sail had been picked up in the wreckage, and would cruise away to the south in the direction where Mason had said he believed there were some inhabited islands. If he could only get a little nearer the lines of commerce, he might signal, either by day with a smoke, or by night with a fire. As it was he had kept a smudge going on this island ever since they had been driven ashore on it. But the island was so low that no one would ever see it. At two in the morning he lay down with this resolve firm in his mind.

Imagine then his surprise and dismay next morning, when he awoke to find the lifeboat gone, and with it all his companions except Judd Mason, who was snoring peaceably, with one leg thrown across the chest of treasure and with his right arm across a pile of Winchesters, a picture of honesty and stability. He started to his feet at a touch, and took in the whole situation at a glance.

"They're gone, and the boat's gone with them," muttered Haskell, his teeth fairly chattering.

WOMEN VOLUNTEERS.

In stress and trouble the women of a nation are always to be counted upon. In Servia the women went to the front with muskets in their hands; they were as strong and brave as the men on the firing line. In this country few of our women escape the weakening troubles peculiar to their sex.

For every disease or ailment of a womanly character, no matter how recent or how long standing, the one sure, reliable remedy of proved merit is Dr Pierce's Favorite Prescription.

It is prepared from nature's roots and herbs and does not contain a particle of alcohol or any narcotic. It's not a secret prescription for its ingredients are printed on the wrapper.

Women are earnestly advised to take it for irregular or painful periods, backache, headache, displacement, catarrhal condition, hot flashes, sallow complexion and nervousness.

For girls about to enter womanhood, women about to become mothers and for the changing days of middle age Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription should always be on hand.

Write Dr. Pierce, Buffalo, N. Y., for free 136 page book on woman's diseases. Every woman should have one.

NO CHARGE FOR THIS GRAND HOME MEDICAL BOOK

Every home should have one. Every man and woman who isn't afraid to read a book so plainly written that anyone can understand it should write today for a revised copy of The People's Common Sense Medical Adviser to Dr. Pierce, Invalids' Hotel, Buffalo, N. Y.

This is a large cloth bound book of 1008 pages; 8 inches long; 1¾ inches thick; brimful of knowledge not found in ordinary books, sent postpaid to any reader who will send this clipping with 20 cents.

"Tom gone, too!" Big, honest Judd Mason uttered it as Caesar no doubt uttered the heartbroken, "Thou, too, Brutus!"

"Tom gone, too," echoed Haskell.

"The dirty, low-down, egg-sucking cur!" muttered Judd. "After all we'd done for him, an' after what you'd promised him."

"I thought I noticed yesterday that he didn't exactly like the arrangement I was making," said Haskell

"Oh, he liked it all right," answered Mason. "Somebody jes' come to him in the night while we was asleep, an' he jes turned traitor, that's all. I thought thar was more to Tom than that. But whar's that pup, Holloway? I'll bet a pewter he's at the bottom o' the whole arrangement."

"Well, they're a poor set to follow such a leader as he will make," commented Haskell. "But what do you reckon they're up to anyway?"

"Oh, they've drawed off, so as to give us a fight for the rest o' this money here, that's all," said Judd

"They won't get it," replied Haskell. "The first thing we do this morning will be to bury this money on the most unlikely spot on this island."

"Whar'll that be?" asked Judd.

"I don't know." Haskell sat and studied for a long time. He knew what a lack of originality characterized the thinking of the average sailor, and thus he decided to bury the money in a place that no sailor had ever heard of money being buried

"Name me all the places that you ever heard of a man burying money," he said to Mason.

Mason named over a dozen kinds of places, thinking that he was thereby suggesting a hiding-place. Finally Haskell looked up

"Mason," he asked, "did you ever hear of a sailor burying his treasure right under the spot where he'd been making his fire every day, and where he expected to keep on making it?"

"No."

"Then that's where we're going to bury this money"

So the money was buried where the ashes of the fire would obliterate all traces of the upturned earth, and the earth that was taken out of the hole was carefully carried and dumped into the sea close by. Then when this work was done, and the tide had gone down sufficiently, the two men waded off to the other islands to the north and, climbing the highest rocks, looked in every direction for some sign of the lifeboat of their comrades. There was nothing to be seen either of them or of Holloway. The vast, gray-green circle of summer sea stretched away to a far horizon line, and not a speck of anything dotted its surface.

"Mason, they're gone," said Haskell. "They're gone for the outside world and have left us two to rot here on this island. When they know we're good and dead, they'll come back after the money we've got here."

"They'd better wait a good many years," replied Mason. "I'll live till they come back, if I have to live on raw land crabs an' seaweed: an' I'll have the heart out o' that dirty Tom, if I've got strength enough left to handle a knife."

But it was of no use to rave or make threats; the four deserters were completely gone. Mason and Haskell watched all that night for any sign of a camp-fire in any direction and they watched all the next day and the next and the next for a smoke. But they saw nothing. One day was like another in sultriness and hopelessness. Only occasionally it rained, and then they caught a supply of fresh water. Their ship biscuit had long since given out, and they were subsisting on rain water and fish and crabs, toasted and eaten without salt. A little vegetation grew on the island and they often plucked the tender buds and sprouts from such shrubs as they deemed harmless and varied their diet by eating these. Tom and the other deserters had left them in possession of nearly all their firearms, as Mason had collected them the night before in order to guard the money, and had slept lightly with one arm thrown across them. However, there was nothing on the island to kill. For two weeks they lay thus helpless upon that barren reef, and Haskell believed that if he remained another two weeks that his reason would surely give way. It looked like a trick of the gods, that he had been allowed to find Philip Ireton and the stolen money, only to discover that the money was as worthless to him as Midas' gold. Their only employment during those days had been to dig a deep cave, with loopholes in the sides, from which they could defend themselves from a very large attacking force.

But at the end of two weeks of those terrible lingering days, Haskell and Mason devised a plan of making use of their firearms. They rigged up a dozen guns to fire all at once, thus thinking to give the sound a greater carrying power and possibly to signal some one of their whereabouts. For two days they kept this up day and night at intervals of one hour, and then they got the desired result. On the third morning a ship hove into sight from the southwest, and they could plainly make out her white speck of sail in the light of the rising sun.

"Sail ahoy!" shouted Judd Mason, and began at once to do an elephantine jig, while he boomed one of those deep-sea songs for which he was noted. Haskell took one long look and then burst into tears like a girl.

For three hours the ship came nearer and nearer, but very slowly; and then Mason uttered an exclamation of anger and disgust. "It's the Nest Egg," he grunted, "or I'm a liar!"

"It certainly looks like the Nest Egg from here," acquiesced Haskell. "What will we do if it is the Egg?"

"Hide an' let some of 'em come ashore an' then cut 'em up and give 'em a fight for their tub."

Both men fell silent for a time, both being intent on studying the approaching craft. Finally Mason spoke again. "It's the Egg," he said. "I'd swear to it on my mother's Bible." When big Judd took that oath, one could be sure that he knew what he was talking about.

"Suppose they don't see fit to come ashore?" asked Haskell. "What will we do in that case?"

"If they don't, then we'll hail 'em. We'll tell 'em the straight truth about how much money we've got, and we'll offer 'em a bribe to take us aboard. I really think we ort to dig up the money and put it out where they can see it. If we kin git 'em divided up we kin whip 'em with six carbines apiece, fer Billy will be aboard per'aps and he'll be givin' 'em all the trouble he can."

"We're two against perhaps a dozen," argued Haskell. "Let's offer them a handsome bribe and get as many as possible to come ashore, and then maybe we can get some advice or assistance from Billy and his wife, if they're still living. And if we can't, let's make peace with them and get out of this hole."

"All right," said Mason, "we'll make peace if we can, but we'll be all ready to fight if we have to. Now let's dig up the money and have it ready to show for itself. Money'll bring 'em ashore if nothin' else will."

So the money was dug up and laid in sight as if the two had been counting it. And then, as the Nest Egg came nearer and nearer, the two desperate men decided that their best plan for enticing their enemy ashore more or less unarmed, would be, not to hide in their cave, but to lie down close to their money as if they were perishing from thirst or fever. As Harry Haskell lay there, awaiting the issue of the moment, his heart was in his throat, for he knew that one false movement would lose everything for him. The magazines of all the pieces had been loaded and they had been placed in handy positions just inside the little cave. Haskell thanked his stars now that he and Mason had made this cave so secure. He felt that they two would be well-nigh invincible in there if they had to fight. The Nest Egg came within hailing distance of their camp, and Captain Gray hailed, but the two men gave no answer. They were waiting. And Harry Haskell was praying for deliverance and a chance to vindicate his father's honor.

CHAPTER XV.

THE FIGHT.

THE Nest Egg sailed right into the little atoll that lay between the inner and the deadly outer reef.

"So, ho," shouted Captain Gray through

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his megaphone. "So we've come up with you at last, have we? And you've found your treasure?"

There was no answer from either Haskell or Mason.

"So, ho," repeated the Captain, "so you're too sick to talk? Well, you'll be sicker still by the time we get through with you."

Haskell was watching intently for some movement or signal from Billy Sangree if he were still aboard and still living.

Suddenly a clear voice singing a queer song rent the air:

"We are three—three—three in number,
three,
Me and ma doxy an' ma uncle and me,
And it's three times three,
And they're all up a tree,
Three, three, three!"

"All that crazy rigmarole is not for nothing," whispered Haskell to his companion. "That song means that Billy and his wife and the Sicilian are pitted against the others and that there are nine o' the others. Nothing that Billy or his wife ever does is without meaning."

While he was speaking a stream of shouting sailors, mostly Malays, went overside like monkeys and dropped into a boat. Haskell noted that neither the Africander nor the Sicilian was with them, but that the Captain was. He noted also that each man carried a gun or pistol in his hand. Six came over, including Captain Gray. If the song meant anything that left three on deck to fight against Beatrice, Billy and Terranova. But perhaps the song meant nothing. In that case they might be greatly outnumbered, both aboard the Nest Egg and ashore. But Beatrice had started singing again, this time less loudly; and Harry strained every nerve to catch her words:

"We are three—three—three in number,
three,
Me and ma Doxy an' ma uncle and me,
And it's three 'gainst three,
For they've gone on a spree,
See? See? See?"

The end of the refrain was accompanied by a fusillade and a patter of bullets in the sand all round the treasure chest.

"Run for the cave!" shouted Haskell to his companion, while he himself made a dash, followed by Mason, who turned just before he entered and fired straight at the enemy who were running up the beach. They had left the money lying out exposed, and had done so purposely. Nothing could be better bait for those crazy Malay sailors than that money.

The enemy came up the beach at a swift trot, often pausing to fire in the direction of the cave. This cave was provided with a loophole on each of the four sides on a level with the ground, so it was impossible to steal a march on it.

"Take the Malays!" thundered big Judd Mason. "I aim to have that damned Captain myself."

As he spoke the cave resounded with a report from his gun. The Captain came to a sudden halt as if he had run into an invisible obstacle, and then threw his hands above his head and fell backward. Haskell was no man-slayer by nature or by education. He fired at the legs of the Malays and succeeded in hobbling two of them in as many shots. But Judd Mason was doing deadly work among them. He had left two of them on the sand, apparently dead. This left only one man on shore still untouched, and he turned and fled toward the boat, while Mason wasted a great deal of ammunition in trying to reach him at long range.

Meanwhile some one aboard the Nest Egg had begun to take careful, long-range shots at the mouth of the cave. But after this had gone on for a little while some one else aboard the ship had started a row; and directly there was about as much firing and counter-firing aboard the ship as there was on shore, and it lasted much longer. Haskell and Mason would not venture from their cave. Two of the wounded Malays on the beach got staggeringly to their feet and began to try to make progress toward the boat. Mason wanted to finish them, but Haskell restrained him.

"They'll never reach the boat anyway," he said to Mason. "Look, that well one will be in in another minute, and then they'll be left ashore. He'll never wait for them. Toss a few more after him to hurry him on."

"Listen," said Mason, after he had fired four or five more shots at the fleeing Malay, who had now jumped into the boat and was rowing rapidly out of range. "Listen, Cap'n, hell's broke loose aboard that schooner. The guid that was workin' on us with the Krag Jorgensen, has cut it out and gone to fightin' bumblebees. Golly, but I wish I was on there with 'em!"

The fusillade aboard the ship had increased until it sounded like the clatter of a Gatling gun.

"Somebody's goin' to git hurt on the Nest Egg if they ain't careful," commented Mason with a grin.

"Pray God it isn't Billy and Beatrice," answered Haskell reverently.

Captain Gray and two of the Malays lay on the beach motionless. They would move no more. The two wounded men were still crawling toward the water line. Presently one fell to the sand, then tried to sit up again, and began to howl like mad, in a hair-raising, piercing voice.

Suddenly the fighting on the deck of the Nest Egg came to a stop. One party or the other had evidently surrendered or all its members had been killed.

"Watch and see how they treat that Malay in the boat and we'll see which side is in command," said Haskell.

"They're taking him overside, friendly as can be," swore Mason. "Our side's been whipped. I wish I had that feller's Krag Jorgensen; I'd pick off everything on board that craft that didn't show the white flag or give some friendly sign."

"Listen," warned Haskell, "Beatrice is singing again."

"We're three—three—three—we still are
three,
Me an ma doxy and the Malay and me,
My uncle's dead, but we still are three,
Three, three, three!"

"They seem to have charge on the ship," remarked Haskell. "Let's make these wounded men prisoners and get down to the water's edge where we can talk to them."

The two men dashed out of their cave, and though one of the wounded Malays showed fight, they soon had both disarmed and bound. Then they rushed to the water's edge and hailed the schooner.

"Schooner ahoy!" shouted the brazen-lunged Judd.

"Judd Mason, ahoy!" replied Billy Sangree through a megaphone.

"Who's in command o' the Nest Egg?" asked Mason between his hands.

"Captain Billy Sangree," replied the megaphone.

"What's the condition on board?" dictated Haskell to Mason.

"What's the condition on board?" bawled big Judd.

"One Spinoza, alias Terranova, friend, dead," replied the megaphone. "Crazy Africander, enemy, dead. One Malay, enemy, dead. Two Malays, prisoners, pretend to be friendly. Will send Malays for you in boat. If they act crooked shoot them."

"All right," dictated Haskell.

"All right!" bawled Mason between his hands. Then the two sat down and waited while two Malays slid overside like monkeys, as they had done less than an hour before, but this time with no weapons in their hands.

The wounded Malays were first taken aboard, and Billy Sangree, who was quite a surgeon, began to dress their wounds. Next the money was brought aboard, and then the two Malays, who had protested their friendship for the new Captain, were sent ashore once more to bury the dead, including the Malay who had been killed aboard ship.

Haskell shed tears of joy at the sight of his two old friends, Billy and Beatrice; and Mason shed them at the sight of white men's food once more. Beatrice prepared a dinner for the two, which began with macaroni, cheese and chile, and ended with red Sicilian wine and apple brandy. It was a dinner that Haskell will remember as long as he lives. And while the dinner was in progress Billy Sangree made him tell all that had taken place since he and his brave little wife had gone overside, and agreed to tell his own story right afterward.

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* * *

Knocking the Show.

"Won't you please take us to see the performing codfish?" little Milton asked his Uncle Dick.

"Great guns!" cried Uncle Dick.

"Oh, it's a fine show! Please take us, there's a good uncle!"

"Performing codfish!"

"Yes, they read and write and tango and fight and eat and do everything people can do!"

"My goodness! If I didn't have an important engagement I'd take you to that."

"Oh, I wish you'd take him!" purred the child's mother. "If you will take him I'll give up having that Miss Finicky that you don't like come to dinner. I'd take him myself only you know so much about animals and such things that you could explain the performance better than I. I think it would be improving."

"Performing codfish improving?"

"Well, there are lions and seals and hippopotami and all kinds of creatures that you know all about from hunting and study."

"That's true. I confess to some slight knowledge of animals, and I know too well how they are trained and made to do these wonderful things!"

"Good!"

"Yes, I know all about it. For instance, the man says to the performing zebra: 'Would you like to go out to lunch today?' and then he jabs a red-hot poker under the zebra's chin and the zebra's head goes up and the spectators laugh and the trainer bows elaborately.

"Then the trainer says: 'Are you ready to go to work now?' and then he stings the zebra on the side of the head and the zebra tries to shake the pain off. The spectators laugh some more. Quite a wicked and playful zebra!

"When he says to the zebra: 'Are you going to bed now? What do you do first?' he jerks the zebra's knees out from under him and the beast appears in a kneeling posture while the band plays 'Now I lay me!'

"Every time the zebra shakes his head he expects or gets a red-hot iron, and when he kneels it is because he expects to feel his legs go out from under him.

"As to the seals, a good way to manage them is to jerk a trapdoor out from under them and make them scramble out of a very hot bath. Seals are peculiar. The minute they get into hot water they want to get out again. Nothing less will ever make a seal move. In getting out of hot water the seals can be taught to play music, do mathematical problems, paint landscapes and fire cannon. Now these performing codfish—I don't know whether they are managed by red-hot pokers or——"

"Never mind," said the child's mother. "You needn't take him."

* * *

Relics.

A Chattanooga man recently met on the highway an aged darky of his acquaintance with his arm in a sling.

"Is your arm broken?" asked the Chattanooga man, solicitously.

The old fellow grinned. "No, boss; it ain't broken—only gun sore."

"Ah! been hunting?"

"No, suh; aint been huntin'. Been shootin at trees."

"Target practice, eh?"

"No, suh; ain't target practice. Jest shootin' at trees."

"I don't understand."

"Well, suh, its jest like dis. I goes out into de woods an' I selects my trees an' I shoots bullets into 'em. In a little while de trees grow' round de bullets. Den I cuts 'em down to sell to persons from de North as relics of the battle of Lookout Mountain."

* * *

No Money.

One morning father missed some money out of his clothes and thought mother had frisked him during the night. So, while mother was busy in another room, father went through her handbag in search of his coin. He found a receipted milk bill, an unpaid ice bill, a big hunk of prepared chalk, a powder puff, two coupons six months old, representing the last time he had taken her to the theater; a button hook; six samples of dress goods; a clipping containing Gene Field's "Little Boy Blue," two safety pins, a sample of talcum powder, one of the baby's mittens, an old tintype of himself taken before marriage, and 7 cents in coin. And father felt so mean that he kicked himself all day.

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Spurs Well Won

Or, THE WOLF PATROL

By John M. Tranter, Scout Master

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CHAPTER IV.

LURE OF THE BLACK SMOKE.

"THERE'S smoke rising up yonder, all right!" exclaimed Foxey, who had gone first of all to discover what had given the tenderfoot such a sensation of alarm.

"But great guns! that only comes from somebody's [illegible] ain't it so, Karl?" said Jack after taking a look.

"Yes, that's true," said the patrol leader, with a feeling of relief; "and if I can judge from the black smoke they make, they don't seem to know much about building a fire; not near what a scout could learn after he's been shown what kind of dry wood ought to be used, so as to make hardly any smoke at all. You notice that's the way with our fire, don't you, boys? Luke has had his lesson. You don't find him taking any old half-green fuel when he can select the very best dry stuff."

"That's nice of you to say so, Karl!" declared the boy mentioned, with a thrill of pride; for, while he may have been a little crack-brained on the subject of flying, like the cranes he was named after, Luke was a rather sensible fellow on the whole.

"But Karl, who d'ye think can be camping along the side of the Ridge there?" asked Dolph, who seemed relieved to know that his worst fears were not likely to be realized. He had expected a storm of fire to sweep down upon them, like the one he remembered reading about not a week back, when some scouts were off into the woods out in a Western state. One of that party was never found again, and the others only saved their lives by finding a stream and keeping in it up to their necks for hours.

"Well, that's a pretty broad question, Dolph," smiled the patrol leader. "Let's see, there used to be some quarrying done around this region; then again I remember that an old man used to come from up here once in so often, with a load of charcoal for sale. It might be either of those, for all we know."

"How about that Dan Brittles crowd?" interrupted Foxey. "Would they have the nerve to follow us here, to give us all the trouble they could think up?"

"They never lose a chance to pester us when we run across them in town," commented Joe King; "and I wouldn't put it past that bunch to make up a scheme to hang around, and do all sorts of things to break up our outing."

"Well, didn't I say somebody stole that bread and cheese and prunes last night?" called out Dolph, triumphantly. "Now mebbe you'll believe me if you find that Brittles gang is around here. They'd steal anything they could lay their hands on, every time."

"It's a camp-fire, all right," mused Karl, still looking over toward the point where the smoke continued to curl lazily above the tops of the trees, possibly not more than half a mile distant; "but the question is, who made it?"

"Well, how about those hobos, Karl?" queried Jack, as though a sudden uneasy thought had struck him.

"Gee! whittaker! yes! What about the men who robbed the Barlow jewelry store?" cried Dolph, in renewed excitement.

"Don't I just wish it did turn out to be them!" declared Brose, with an emphatic shake of his stubborn head. "Mebbe we wouldn't throw the net around 'em in great style, and go marchin' back to Culver with our prisoners, and all the stuff that they hooked from Mr. Barlow! Five hundred dollars did you say, Joe? Well, just stop and think what great times we could have with all that money. And I know some people in Culver besides Dolph's maw, who pretend to make fun of the Boy Scouts and all the grand, good things they learn. Say, after they saw us walkin' along Main street with our prisoners, maybe they wouldn't crow mighty small! They'd reckon we'd won our spurs, all right, I guess."

"You are the greatest dreamer I ever knew, Brose," said Karl, laughing. "Why, before we even know who lit that fire you've got us doing the work of Chief Bunny and his men, capturing the desperate rascals, recovering the spoils, receiving the reward and marching along Main street, cheered to the echo. Wake up! We've got a heap of work cut out for us, remember, before one-quarter of all that grand fairy story comes true. And first of all, I say we ought to fortify our stomachs for a hard day's work by eating that breakfast as soon as it's ready."

"Tell us what you mean by a hard day's work, Karl?" implored Brose; "will we practice some of our scout business, and take a little run over that way, to find out who's in the other camp?"

"That might be a good idea, Brose," replied the patrol leader; "because we don't want things to happen all around us, and be in the dark ourselves. Scouts should always observe what is going on. It makes good practice for them, you see. And in this case, why, if it should turn out that Dan Brittles and his crowd have come up to Raccoon Ridge to camp, just to give us all the trouble they can, the sooner we find that out the better; because we can get ready to give them a warm reception if they come prowling around here."

Considerable excitement prevailed while they were putting the finishing touches to the morning meal. Fresh eggs had been brought along, and having been carefully packed they were found to be in prime shape, so that every fellow could have a couple, fried, and turned over, along with some bacon. This, with coffee and bread and butter, constituted their breakfast. Later on one of the scouts declared his intention of showing what fine pancakes he could make, as the hired girl at home had instructed him in the art of mixing the batter and frying it on the the griddle.

"Only," warned Brose, "while you're in camp, don't let us ever hear you call them such a silly name as pancakes again. Nothing but flapjacks goes when you're out in the woods. Ain't that so, Karl?"

"I reckon you're about right there, Brose," replied the patrol leader, laughingly.

In spite of the air of mystery that had already commenced to gather around the camp of the scouts, they all seemed to enjoy that morning meal heartily. As a rule it takes a great deal to interfere seriously with the appetite of a healthy, growing boy, and especially when he is away from home and doing his own cooking.

Of course, as they ate they chattered like a lot of magpies. Every fellow had a scheme to propose, and the patrol leader really encouraged this game, because he thought he might, in this way, receive some valuable pointers.

"But see here, Karl," remarked Jack, as they drew near the end of the meal, "if the whole caboodle goes trailing off, what's going to become of all our stuff here? S'pose that it does turn out to be the tough crowd from Culver, and that they've just made all that black smoke to coax us to scout over that way, leaving our tent and our duffle around? Right now a couple of them may be watching us from behind the trees or bushes and waiting 'till we troop off. Then think what awful things they'd do to our camp outfit!"

"Yes, that's so, Karl," Joe King hastened to add; "why, I wouldn't put it past that Dan Brittles to cut our tent into ribbons and carry off most of our blankets. And as for grub, it's little that'd escape their eyes and noses. We've just got to remember what a hard lot they are, when we go to scoutin' around."

Karl chuckled as though pleased.

"I was just waiting to hear some of you get on to that idea," he remarked; "and now you've shown that you're not asleep, let me tell you I never meant that all of us should leave camp. I'll take Foxey, Jack and Luke along with me, and trust to the other three to stand guard, so as to keep the enemy at bay if they should turn up while we're away."

"That's the ticket!" muttered Luke.

"Couldn't do better, Karl, because who knows but what there might come a chance for the wily old Fox to get busy, and scent out a trail? And Luke—he's a judge of fires, all right; while the whole four of us could fight, if we had to. Course we don't count on doin' that. No true scout ever does; but he's bound to be prepared, you know, for whatever comes."

"Yes, but we don't feel so good over having to stay home like a lot of old women, when there's something going on," grumbled Brose, who felt his sad lot much more than either of his comrades, Joe King and Dolph.

"Duty first," said Karl; "orders are orders. You never know what sort of luck will strike you. It may turn out that, after all, you three will have what fun there is going; especially if it should happen the way you said a bit ago, and this black smoke should be only a lure to draw us away so Dan and his cronies can make free with our belongings."

"Whee! that's so!" exclaimed Joe King; "me for a big crackerjack of a club, that will thump a feller on the head and bring him to his knees every lick. And Dolph, here's one of the same kind for you, because, you see, we're justified in defending our property, even if we have joined the peace-loving scouts, ain't we, Karl?"

"You certainly are, and to the limit," asserted the patrol leader, vigorously, for he was no milk-and-water sort of a boy, just a healthy, generous, good-natured give-and-take chap, ready to stand up for his rights when attacked, as every scout should who is worthy of the name.

There was an immediate scurrying around, as they packed away their blankets and fixed things so that those left in charge of the camp would not have too much to look after.

"All ready, boys?" asked Karl, when he thought everything had been attended to properly, "because that smoke may go down at any time, and we want to mark the place well in our minds before we start, so we can find the abandoned camp, if nothing more."

"Yes," added Foxey eagerly, "and that's where your Uncle Foxhall comes into play, a-skirmishin' around, picking up all sorts of clews, and reading a story right from the warm ashes, the footprints that lie about, and heaps of other things too numerous to mention, but which a tenderfoot, like Dolph here, never would think of noticing. I'm just wild to get busy and show what I know about tracks."

"Brose, I leave you in charge here," said Karl, as he prepared to move off, "be vigilant, and look out that they don't take you by surprise, if so be the Brittles lot are on Raccoon Ridge. And if they try to swarm over the camp, you've got my permission to hit, and hit right hard with those clubs you're holding. That's all!"

"Good luck to you, fellers!" called out Joe King.

Dolph did not say anything. The fact of the matter was he hated very much to see more than half of the patrol go away like this, when for aught they

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knew the woods might be just swarming with all sorts of enemies, ready to pounce down on them—bad boys from the home town, with a grievance against the newly organized scout patrol; wild animals, like bears, or panthers, or elephants, for all they knew, if a menagerie had been wrecked on the railroad, as some one had suggested; or else a desperate lot of tramps, who made it their business to go from town to town breaking into banks and jewelry stores and ticket offices on the railroad.

Dolph just stood there with a mournful expression on his face, looking after the quartette of scouts moving away, until they vanished from view in the woods that covered the side of the ridge.

Then Brose, impressed with a sense of suddenly acquired authority, called to the tenderfoot to wake up and carry out certain orders which he thought it good policy to give while they were still unmolested. There could be no telling at what minute several rough figures might dash out of the bushes and proceed to try to capture the camp of the scouts.

And in this fashion on the very first morning of their stay on Raccoon Ridge did the members of the Wolf Patrol find themselves confronted by a series of very strange happenings.

CHAPTER V.

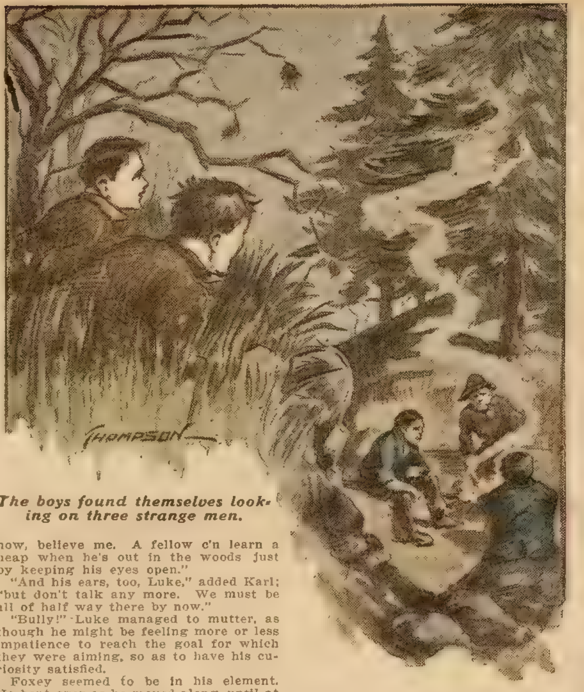
SCOUT TACTICS.

MEANWHILE, having left the camp far behind them, the four scouts were proceeding in the direction of the suspicious smoke, determined to learn what had caused it.

Karl realized that they were now face to face with an opportunity to make use of any woodcraft that any one of their number possessed. Of course he and Foxey were the only ones who had made a study of this science which the backwoodsmen of other days had learned from the Indians. Jack was just beginning to discover the value and fascination of the subject; and as for Luke, it was pretty much all Greek to him.

"Why are you edging down hill all the while, Karl?" the latter asked, in a low tone, as he came close up to the leader.

"Because the shelter happens to run that way," was the reply, "and it's worth a whole lot to us to keep back of the bushes. How do we know but what there might be a sentry on the lookout, who'd be sure to sight us if we were careless? It pays to watch your steps, Luke, always. Never forget that."


The boys found themselves looking on three strange men.

"Huh! guess you're right there, Karl," grunted the other; "didn't I come mighty near taking a nasty header just a minute ago, when my foot got snagged in that vine? I'm watching where I step now, believe me. A fellow c'n learn a heap when he's out in the woods just by keeping his eyes open."

"And his ears, too, Luke," added Karl; "but don't talk any more. We must be all of half way there by now."

"Bully!" Luke managed to mutter, as though he might be feeling more or less impatience to reach the goal for which they were aiming, so as to have his curiosity satisfied.

Foxey seemed to be in his element. He bent over as he moved along, until at times it almost seemed as though he might be the animal he was named after, and not a human being at all.

Now and then he would scan the ground, where it happened to be softer than usual, as though looking for footprints. Then he would turn his head from one side to the other, apparently examining the prospect ahead, as though to decide whether any concealed enemy might be lying in wait behind the trees that grew so thickly.

Had Foxey been questioned as to the motive of all this energy, most likely he would have replied that he was "on the job," and that when a scout found himself advancing toward the camp of an enemy he had reason to keep all his faculties on tap.

A crow cawed loudly as he stretched his neck, and watched in a suspicious fashion the progress of the four boys below. Foxey shook his head up at the black rascal, and could be heard to mutter his disapproval.

"A bad thing that, let me tell you," he remarked, softly. "You see, if they've got a feller acting as sentry; and he's wide awake, why he'd notice the way that silly crow acts, and of course he'd just say to himself: 'Now, seems like that bird wouldn't carry on that way 'less there was somethin' goin' on down below.' And so he'd keep a-watchin' an' a-watchin' this way till he glimpsed us. There, thank goodness, the old crow's gone and flown away; but he needn't keep on chatterin' for all he's worth as he flies, as if he wanted to tell all the woods folks about us. I'm glad crow language ain't understood by them as walk on two legs."

Chancing to cast a quick glance toward the patrol leader just then, Foxey suddenly relapsed into a condition of silence and resumed his forward progress.

Jack and Luke, watching how the tracker bent over, and how silently he managed to move along, took pattern by his actions. They were heart and soul in the scout movement, and wanted to learn all they could of the numerous interesting things that go hand in hand with woods training.

So far, Karl was very well satisfied with the progress they had made. He knew that the spot, where that black streamer of smoke had been curling upward above the treetops, must now be very close at hand.

In order to follow the best line of shelter they had lately altered their course. Luke could no longer complain that they were going down grade. for, on the contrary, their course was continually upwards. Having jotted his localities in a corner of his mind, Karl knew that already they must be above the place of the smoke, and still they kept on ascending.

He figured that this was apt to prove a good thing, since it would be easier to spy upon the hostile camp from above than if they were compelled to look upwards all the while.

More cautious than ever grew the movements of Karl and Foxey. They seemed at times almost to flatten themselves out upon the ground and glide along like a couple of snakes. And, of course, as those who followed in their wake patterned after their movements as much as possible, they were getting a splendid lesson in scout tactics, one they would never be apt to forget, and one which was apt to prove of the greatest benefit to them as ambitious boys.

It happened that at one particular point Foxey somehow managed to get ahead of the patrol leader. This Karl did not mind in the least. He was proud of the skill shown by his tracker and proud that he excelled in his particular line of business, even as he exulted in Jack's ability to erect a tent in a marvelously short time, or Luke's to build a fire without a single match, after the old-time flint and steel process, or the use of a little bow with which he created friction and secured the vital spark that set his little pack of inflammable tow burning.

When Foxey therefore halted, Karl did likewise, and gave a signal with his foot, tapping the head of the next in line, so that Luke would understand they meant to slow up.

Raising his head and looking beyond, Karl discovered that Foxey seemed to be intently observing something that had caught his attention. A thrill passed over the patrol leader at the possibility of their having succeeded in approaching the spot where the other camp-fire burned without being discovered. It was a triumph of their ability to do things, and must give them all renewed confidence whenever an occasion arose again calling for such knowledge.

Now Foxey was turning to look back. Karl saw him grin as he crooked his finger and silently made motions for the patrol leader to creep alongside. This he immediately started to do, being consumed with an overwhelming curiosity to learn what the other had discovered.

It appeared that they had arrived on the brink of a steep bank that ran down for perhaps fifty feet. A rocky glen lay below, and amidst the fallen trees and the outcropping rocks a fire burned lazily, having apparently accomplished the duty for which it had been lighted earlier in the morning.

Screened by a light fringe of grass that chanced to grow along the edge of this bank the two boys could see without running much danger of being discovered themselves. At first glance Karl knew that one question was settled without a doubt. Instead of the familiar persons of Dan Brittles, the town bully, and several of his chosen cronies, he found himself looking at three strange men, who lounged there at their ease, smoking pipes and apparently bent only upon killing time.

They were undoubtedly tramps, and yet could not belong to the ordinary hobo class, for their clothes did not seem to be torn and filthy, neither were their shoes out at the toes, as is the usual case with railroad tie-walkers.

A second look, more penetrating than the first, told Karl that these men were really a hard lot. Their faces showed signs of drinking, for they were more or less flushed; and the boy believed he had never before looked on a tougher set of "Wandering Willies" than he saw before him.

Of course he could only come to one conclusion, which was that these men were the desperate trio of yeggs who had committed the recent robbery in Culver. They may have concluded that it was too risky to board a freight train and pull out in that way, since every neighboring town would have been notified and suspicious characters be arrested, especially if they were heading away from the town where the outrage had been committed.

It would surely be wisdom on their part to seek such a sheltered nook as this, away up on Raccoon Ridge, where, with food in plenty, cached ahead of time in anticipation of what was to happen, they could keep hidden until the excitement had died away, when it would be safe for them to make a move looking toward flight.

All this flew through the active mind of the boy in less than a dozen seconds. He tried to impress their faces on his memory, so that he would be prepared to identify the three hard-looking men, in case they were brought before him at some future time.

Up to now Karl did not dream of attempting anything looking to the capture of the robbers, in case these fellows should prove to be such. His one thought, possibly, was that they must be desperadoes of the worst type, and that their presence in the neighborhood was likely to interfere somewhat with the pleasant time he and his chums had expected to have during this late summer outing.

He knew from the indications that both Luke and Jack were edging their way along to the front, bent on ascertaining what it was that seemed to be affording their two comrades so much interest. They must have guessed at least something of the truth, basing their opinion on the suspicious way in which Karl and Foxey were peering through that thin fringe of grass.

And presently some one came creeping alongside Karl, breathing hard, both from excitement and the labor of making this snail-like progress while lying flat on his stomach.

It was Luke, and when he first glimpsed the trio of ruffians lolling around the fire below Karl felt him give a tremendous start. Fearful lest the other in his excitement might utter some sound that would betray them, the patrol leader instantly put out his hand, and squeezed Luke's wrist. Apparently the signal was understood, for Luke managed to hold his breath and take it out in gaping.

More soft gliding sounds announced that Jack too had arrived on the other side of Karl, so that there were now four of them peeping through the thin grass and taking in everything that could be seen fifty feet or so below where they crouched.

Several minutes passed by. They could hear the grumble of heavy voices below, and occasionally a laugh came welling up, as one of the hobos struck a merry mood; but little that was said could be understood, for it was spoken in a tramp lingo that none of them was the least familiar with.

Perhaps in moving ever so slightly, in order to ease the strain on his arm, Luke may have incautiously touched a piece of rock that was balancing on the edge of the decline. The first thing they knew this fragment, as large as a man's fist in size, had started to roll down the slope, with a very strong probability

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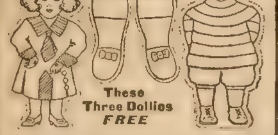
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that it would startle the trio of campers, and bring about a rush upwards to investigate.

Foxey instantly flattened himself out after his customary cautious manner, and both Luke and Jack hastened to follow what seemed to be a good example; but Karl, feeling that the grass was thick enough to screen him from the eyes of the tramps in case he kept perfectly still, watched, with his heart in his throat, to see what followed the dislodgment of that rolling stone.

CHAPTER VI.

THANKS TO MOTHER RABBIT.

IN THE next few seconds the young patrol leader saw about the most astonishing occurrence in all his experience, something that would never cease to arouse his wonder and cause him to feel that he and his chums must be watched over by a kindly fate.

The stone, in rolling, chanced to pass through a bunch of grass that made quite a patch upon the face of the slope, some ten feet below where Karl lay.

Already its progress must have been heard by the three men below, for they were scrambling to their feet, and suggestive movements toward hip pockets would seem to indicate that they half expected to be compelled to defend themselves. Then all at once a hoarse laugh broke forth.

"Look at what give the lot o' us a bad scare!" shouted one fellow; "on'y a bunny makin' tracks. Been a-hidin' thar in that grass all the time we was here, I reckon."

Yes, from the bunch of grass a rabbit had suddenly darted out and started leaping along the side of the slope, gradually moving upwards, as such animals almost invariably do when frightened. The stone kept on rolling down with more or less clatter, but it no longer possessed any significance to the three hobos, who, of course, believed the little animal must have dislodged it when startled.

As the men dropped back again into their former seats, still laughing at their sudden alarm, Karl was puzzling his brain over one thing. How did it come that the rabbit had remained there so near the camp of the hobos, which they must have occupied for many hours, and gave no evidence of intended flight until the rolling stone had actually bounded through the bunch of grass?

And right there his knowledge, acquired as a scout, of things pertaining to woodcraft helped him to solve the mystery, which to another boy might have been utterly beyond explanation.

This habit of always observing things when abroad had, in times past, shown Karl how a rabbit that has a brood of young, when danger suddenly draws near, will run away in a peculiar fashion, halting every dozen feet or so as though to tempt pursuit, and thus relieve her offspring from danger.

Moreover, the habit is not confined to rabbits either, for Karl had often seen a mother partridge flutter across the road as though with a broken wing. At first he had been tempted naturally enough to give chase, in the hope of capturing the sorely hurt bird, only to discover suddenly that she had miraculously recovered and gone spinning away out of sight.

The third time this occurred Karl began to think that there must be some object back of the game. And accordingly he made it his duty on the very next occasion, not to pay the slightest attention to the fluttering partridge but to start into the brush alongside the road from which she had issued with such a tremendous clatter.

And there he had scattered a whole covey of half-grown young birds, that had remained in hiding while their devoted mother tried to "toll" the danger away by risking her life.

Yes, undoubtedly that rabbit must have a nest in the bunch of grass. This would account for her remaining there all this time, and for the fact that when the sudden coming of the bounding rock had started her forth still she hesitated from time to time, and in this fashion sought to draw persuit after her, so that her litter might remain undisturbed.

Again the others had raised their heads to look. None of them apparently knew just then how it came that they had escaped being routed from their hiding-place; unless possibly Foxey too had peeped again in time to notice the disappearing bunny, and guessed something of the truth.

Of course they did not mean to stay here indefinitely. Already they had seen as much as they wanted, and both Jack and Luke were fairly itching to push back to some convenient distance, where they could ask questions and pick up information; because they just knew that the others must have learned more than they were able to discover, being somewhat new to woodcraft and the ways of scouts.

Karl, while continuing to watch the three hobos, must have been carrying on quite a lively discussion with himself as to how he and his chums should act. It may be all very well to tell how a bunch of scouts managed to trap a set of desperate yeggmen, but Karl knew that many obstacles to success were bound to confront them. And the more he looked at the hard faces of those men the graver appeared the task.

Of course it seemed to be their duty to attempt something that would start the wheels of justice moving. If the task of trying to capture the robbers seemed too vast for them to attempt, why, they could at least find a way of communicating with the Culver police force, and in this fashion feel that they were lending poor Mr. Barlow a helping hand.

As scouts the members of the Wolf Patrol had arranged all sorts of signals for their guidance under certain conditions. If one were prowling around in the dark and realized that he was near some other unknown party, the whine of a wolf would immediately bring recognition if the unseen happened to be a member of the same patrol.

Then Karl had arranged other signals, calculated to be useful where even the slightest sound could not be uttered for fear of discovery.

Just now all he had to do was to give both Luke and Jack three little digs in the ribs with his knuckles. That was meant as a sign that they were to pass along in case another scout lay beyond; and then start to withdraw in the same cautious fashion as they had advanced a while before.

By now both Luke and Jack were feeling much more confidence in their ability to accomplish these things. They also experienced a sense of gratification because of their having mastered so much scoutcraft. It made them feel more important and worthy to wear the uniforms that would soon be forthcoming, now that they had all earned the necessary money, as the rules of the organization provide.

Slowly, inch by inch as it were, they pushed back from the brow of the descent. The last glimpse Karl had of the trio of rascals they were still lying there as before, apparently satisfied with their lot, and in no hurry to leave such a comfortable camp, to go out where ambitious police heads would be constantly on the watch for a party answering their description.

After a bit the boys were able to move faster, because danger of discovery became much less the further they crawled away from the glen where the hobos were settled for an indefinite stay.

Although Luke was fairly quivering with eagerness to start talking, he dared not begin until Karl gave the word. And the patrol leader did not mean to remove the embargo on the tongues of his chums until he felt sure that they had placed sufficient distance between themselves and the hostile camp so that there would really be no danger of their being overheard or discovered.

But in good time that point was reached, and accordingly Karl, turning on the others, remarked in a low and cautious tone:

"Well, what do you want to know first of all, Luke? I can see that you're fairly bursting, wanting to ask questions. But let me warn you not to say anything out loud. There are times when it pays to whisper all you've got to say, and this is one of them. Go ahead!"

Luke never waited to be asked twice. Modesty was not one of his failings; and as soon as Karl left off speaking he started in.

"Who d'ye think them men were, Karl?" he asked first of all, with an utter disregard for grammar that must have horrified his teacher in Culver High School, had she been within hearing distance; "and say, whatever kept 'em from comin' up to see what started that stone to rollin'? I reckon now you'n Foxey here know more'n the rest of the crowd, so please open up, and put us wise to what's what, won't you, Karl?"

When Luke got fully started asking things, the quickest way to satisfy his yearning for information was to plunge in, and make full explanations. This Karl meant to do without any delay. Besides, he thought it just as well that these other members of the patrol should pick up some useful information while they had the chance.

"First of all I'll tell you the reason why the men laughed, and dropped back into their seats again, satisfied that the alarm was a false one. A mother rabbit had been lying snug in a bunch of half-dead grass with her little bunnies, all the time the hobos camped there, hours and hours, waiting for them to leave. Now, just as luck would have it, that rock bounded straight into that clump of grass, and then on down the slope. It started the old rabbit to jumping, and the men seeing her go of course supposed that she must have set that stone to rolling. And in that way we were saved a whole lot of trouble. It was one chance in a thousand that it could happen, but it did, all the same."

"Well, that beats anything I ever ran across!" exclaimed Jack.

"Tell you what it makes me think of," said Luke. "Mebbe some of you remember about David and Absalom and all them things, and how once, when David was being hunted by his enemies, he crawled into a black cave and slept. After he went in a bully old spider started to work and wove a great big web across the mouth of the cave. Then up comes the pursuers, and some wanted to bother searching the cave, but the leader, he showed them the spider's web, and told them there was no use lookin' in there, because the man they wanted couldn't pass by without tearing that flimsy lace. So they went away, and David was saved by a spider, just like we was by an innocent old bunny. I'm goin' to be more careful how I throw stones at rabbits after this. But how d'ye know it had a family there, Karl? If woodcraft c'n tell you that, put us on to the dodge."

So Karl, not averse to giving information, told what he had seen of the animal's halting ways when fleeing, and supplemented the information with some accounts of the wily partridges he had observed; to all of which the two scouts listened with deepest interest.

"But answer my other question, won't you, Karl?" said Luke, presently.

"You mean about the three men, and who I think they are?" the patrol leader went on to say. "Well, there isn't a single question in my mind but what those are the rascals who robbed Mr. Barlow's store in our town. They think it's good policy to hide up here in Raccoon Ridge till the excitement has passed away, when they can go about their business, and break into some bank perhaps, that they've got their eyes on. And boys, it strikes me that it's up to us to spoil their game some way or other; for such a chance to win our spurs as scouts may never come again. Though of course I mean to put it to a vote, and what the majority says must go."

Luke, Jack and Foxey exchanged looks, and from the delighted expression that immediately spread over their faces, it seemed evident that they already knew just how the majority would favor any bold scheme which the daring leader of the Wolf Patrol might originate.

This thrilling story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

❧ ❧ ❧

In Father's Car.

"Where were you last night?" asked one girl of another.

"I was out riding with father in his car."

"But I did not know your father had an automobile."

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PEPPERS

Changed the Name.

One morning Rosie's teacher noticed her hanging around the desk with rather a wistful expression.

"Well, Rosie, what is it?" she finally asked, drawing the child to her.

"Please, teacher, we've got a new baby t' our house."

"Oh, have you, Rosie? Isn't that fine? What's the baby's name?"

"Ikie."

Several days later the teacher remembered to inquire about the new arrival:

"Oh, Rosie, how is Ikie today?"

The child looked bewildered. "Oh, teacher, we ain't got no Ikie."

"Yes. You told me you had a baby."

A gleam of intelligence appeared on Rosie's face. "No teacher, his name's Mose; his name ain't Ikie. We found we already got one Ikie."

Thrift.

It was the morning of the Sabbath. As Sandy was making his way homeward after attending kirk, the minister happened to overtake him.

"Eh," said Sandy, "that was a powerful discourse on 'Thrift' ye preached this morning."

The minister smiled benignly.

"I'm glad ye were able to profit by it," was his gratified reply.

"Profit!" exclaimed Sandy. "Why, mon, I would ha' put ma sixpence into the plate wi'out a thought but for yer providential words. The saved me fourpence there and then."

Disgusted.

A Chicago man who has a son at Cornell took occasion while on the way home from New York to stop off for the purpose of seeing how the boy was getting along. It happened to be just after the Cornell football team, which had undergone many humiliations that season, had been beaten by Colgate.

"How are things going with the football team?" the father asked, pretending to be seeking information.

"The Cornell football team!" the young man exclaimed with all the disgust that he could put into his tones; "it has been beaten by everything except the Colonial Dames!"

The Splash.

An old farmer and his wife drove to market one day. It had been a very wet day, and large pools of water had formed in the roadway between the farm and town.

On the return journey an old friend was met.

"And how are you today?" was the friendly greeting.

"Oh, very well, thank you!" answered the farmer.

"How is the missis?" continued the friend.

"She's fine, fine!" answered the farmer. "She's behind there" (jerking his thumb toward the back seat).

"She's not there!" said the astonishd friend. The old farmer slowly turned and looked over his shoulder, then coolly replied:

"Humph! That was the splash, then!"

Too Much Stress.

Postmaster General Burleson tells of an old Scotchman who was listening to Former Secretary Wilson's lecture on the activity of microbes. The Secretary of Agriculture said:

"There are microbes in the cabbage and microbes in the wheat and microbes in everything that grows."

The old Scotchman paid strict attention to the lecture.

When he left the hall one of his friends asked him how he liked the lecture.

"I don't see why the Secretary of Agriculture should put so much stress on what the McCrobes done," he said. "They've done no more than the McGregors or the McPhersons, and there lives no such clan as the Campbells, anyway."

No Need.

Sir Joseph Ward likes a good story and he can also tell an amusing one. Here is a favorite:

A certain Maori "witch doctor" was held in great awe and reverence by the superstitious natives. The man claimed that he was by his magic enabled to walk upon the water, and one day his disciples went with him to the seashore, expecting to see him perform the miracle. When they reached the water's edge the man turned to his followers.

"Don't you really believe that I can walk on the sea?" he asked in solemn tones.

"Yes, yes," they replied reverently, "we do."

"Then," said the witch doctor, as he walked coolly away, "there is no need for me to do it."

Expensive Shooting.

A gentleman took some shooting ground in Ireland last season, and failing to obtain any sport was plodding disconsolately homeward one winter evening wet and weary and carrying a very light bag, namely, one snipe. Meeting a caretaker on the estate, he said:

"Well, this country of yours is a most accursed place. Look at this wretched bird. That's all I have shot while I'm here, and you may look at this now as a curiosity, for it has cost me £50!"

"Faix, your honor," replied the native, scratching his head gravely, "it's well you didn't meet any more of them, seeing they're so dear."

Remembered the Next Time.

An army officer, in his expense list on Government service, put down:

"Porter, 10 cents."

The officer was requested to report to the war office, where he was told:

"While executing public duty refreshments are not chargeable to the nation."

"The item does not represent refreshments," he replied, "but a fee to a carrier."

"You should have said 'porterage,'" was then explained to him.

When the officer had occasion to take a hansom, remembering instructions, he wrote in his accounts:

"Cabbage, 50 cents."

Thankful.

The Irishman was relating to some friends in Glasgow how one night on retiring to bed he fancied he saw a ghost, and, having a revolver handy, he fired at it. Next morning he examined the object he had shot and discovered it to be his shirt.

"What did you do then?" exclaimed one of the company.

"Bedad, I just thanked heaven I wasn't inside av it," replied Pat.

Unsympathetic.

The late Maurice Barrymore was the idol of the "Lambs" during his lifetime, and even now the members of that club take delight in citing instances of his ready sympathy or sprightly wit.

One day, so the story goes, Barrymore was swinging down Fifth avenue when Sidney Rosenfeld, the playwright, rushed up to him, all excitement.

"Oh, Maurice," he wailed, "have you heard of my misfortune?"

"No," Barrymore sympathized; "is there illness in your family?"

"Not that," said Rosenfeld; "but almost as bad. My little boy, 5 years of age, got hold of my new play and tore it to tatters."

"I didn't know the child could read,' said Barrymore—and continued his walk

No Chance for Her.

A missionary who was making his way through a backwoods region came upon an old woman sitting outside a cabin. He entered upon a religious talk and finally asked her if she didn't know there was a day of judgment coming.

"Why no," said the old lady. "I hadn't heerd o' that. Won't there be more'n one day?"

"No, my friend; only one day," was the reply.

"Well, then," she mused, "I don't reckon I can get to go, for we've only got one mule and John always has to go everywhere first."

Arthur's Question.

One morning at the breakfast table Mr. Francis heard one of the children finding fault with something he was told to eat.

"Well, upon my word," said the father, "you children are getting too dainty for anything! So you think, Arthur, you should have jam and butter on the same piece of bread, do you? Well, when I was your age I was very glad to get dry bread to eat!"

"You have a much better time living with us, don't you, father?" queried little Arthur.

Two Before Him.

A story about King Edward is worth repeating. Just before the illness which caused the postponement of the coronation, he was racing down one of the country roads in his motor-car at a speed which was beyond the legal limit.

"Hi! Hi!" called a policeman. "Stop there, in the name of the law!"

His majesty is said to have slackened speed and called out: "But I'm the King."

"Jest you come aht o' that," was the reply; "yer the third king wot's come along this morning."

What Ailed Him.

Senator Vardaman of Mississippi was making his maiden speech in the Senate.

"My brain reels at the idea!" he shrieked. "My soul is consumed within me! My speech fails! I am at loss for words! I am burning with indignation——"

"You are out of order," announced Presiding Officer "Sunny Jim," calmly.

"I guess that is what's the matter with me," said the Mississippian, disgustedly, as he sank into his seat.

Had Worn Off.

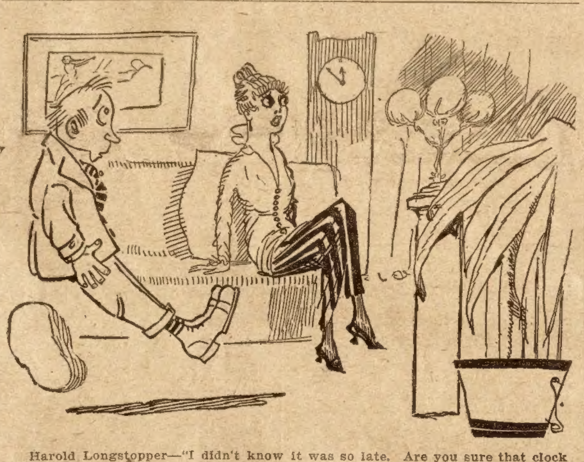
The dealer in antiques was showing an old violin to a probable buyer.

"Yes," he said, "that is of historical interest; that is the i-dentical fiddle Nero played while Rome was burning!"

"Oh, that is a myth."

The dealer agreed, saying:

"Yes, it is; and Myth's name was on it, but it has got worn off."



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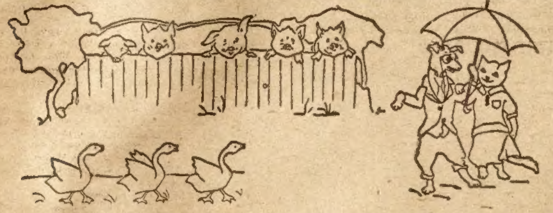

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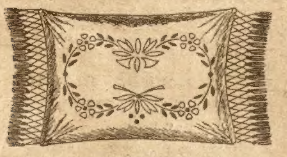

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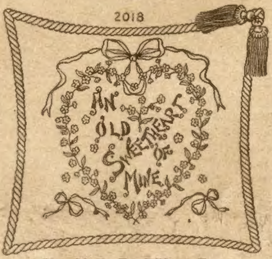

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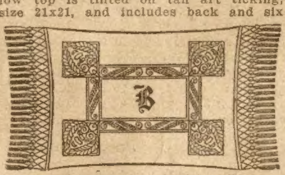

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* * *

Too Hasty.

Here is one that was recalled by Congressman Albert Estiponal of Louisiana, when the conversation at a social affair turned to the precipitate nature of some people.

Some time ago a wild young animal named Jimmy was promoted from the third grade in a public school to the fourth. The teacher in the fourth grade was young and timid, and knowing Jimmy's reputation, there came a great fear in her gentle little heart. With Jimmy's old teacher, however, it was different.

"If you have any trouble with him," said the third-grade teacher to the fourth, "just send him downstairs to me. I'll fix his feet for him."

A week went by, and one day Jimmy appeared at the third-grade teacher's door. Little schoolmarm got right on the job. Without any preliminaries, Jimmy was yanked into the room, laid across her knee and beautifully fanned.

"Now, then, Master Jimmy," said the teacher, releasing the youngster, "what have you got to say for yourself?"

"Please, Miss Mary," was the startling rejoinder, "Miss Maggie wants to know if you won't please lend her your penknife."

* * *

A Doomed Dog.

Customer—"I wish to buy a dog collar, if you please; something handsome and showy."

Shopkeeper—"Will this do?"

Customer—"No; I'd like something more expensive than that. You see, it's my wife's dog I want it for, and I should like to get some one to steal it."

WATER PISTOL 25c

Shape of 6 shot repeater. Handsomely nickel plated. Beautifully finished. Shoots accurately, 30 feet straight to the mark. Loads of fun. Surprise your friends with a laugh-provoking shower bath. Perfectly harmless. Send 25 cents to pay for a year's subscription to EVERYDAY LIFE, and we will send Water Pistol FREE with our compliments to introduce.

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MAGIC MADE EASY 150 MAGIC TRICKS 10c

With coins, cards, dice, ribbons, rings, etc., explained, so simple that you can do them at once. You can astonish and amuse friends and make money. Be a wizard and shine as a star in your town.

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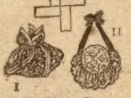
PATTERN COUPONS FREE!

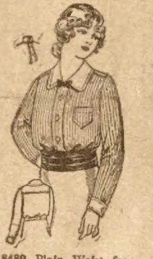
Hundreds of Patterns to Select From

The great difficulty in making one's own garments is to get suitable patterns. Our women readers could make many pretty and useful things for themselves and their children if they could get well-made patterns. We have arranged to give our readers a pattern service unexcelled.

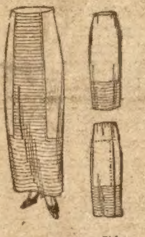
We have a splendid offer of the best and most fashionable patterns that can be produced by the greatest designers of New York and Paris, and what is more, these patterns will be within the reach of every one, and every one will have a wide selection to choose from. **Read our splendid offer below.**



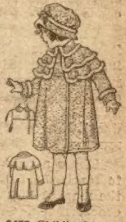
8474 Fancy Bags, One Size.



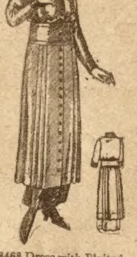
8480 Plain Waist for Misses and Small Women, 16 and 18 years.



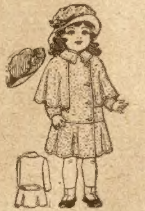
8471 Three-Piece Skirt 24 to 34 waist.



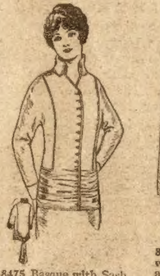
8472 Child's Coat, 2 to 6 years.



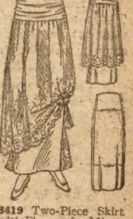
8468 Dress with Plaited Tunic for Misses and Small Women, 16, 18 and 20 years.



8444 Doll's Coat and Hat, 18, 22 and 26 inches high.



8475 Basque with Sash Extensions, 34 to 42 bust.



8419 Two-Piece Skirt with Flounce for Misses and Small Women, 16 and 18 years.

HOW TO GET THE FREE PATTERNS

Here is the way we will do it. To every one who will send us one dollar for a year's subscription to the Chicago Ledger we will send absolutely free five pattern coupons. Each coupon will be good for one pattern and you can select the patterns from those illustrated in any issue of the Chicago Ledger. When you see a pattern that you like all you have to do is to send us a coupon and it will be sent to you at once. In this way you will have hundreds of patterns from which to pick the five that you will be entitled to, and you have all the time you need to pick out the ones you want.

These patterns are the best that can be made. Each pattern gives full directions for the cutting and making with information as to the amount of cloth required, etc., so that any one can make any of the designs illustrated with no trouble at all. At the same time, they are so stylish and accurately cut that dressmakers and seamstresses all over the country will be quick to take advantage of this liberal offer. Some will subscribe for two years so they can get ten coupons. These designs are made by the best designers and modists of New York and Paris, and are up-to-the-minute in fashion and beauty.

We treat old and new customers alike on this splendid offer. If you are already a subscriber send in a dollar and we will send you the five pattern coupons and extend your subscription one year from the time it now expires.

To get these five coupons entitling you to five patterns, fill out the blank below and enclose it with one dollar for a year's subscription to the Chicago Ledger. Do this now—today! No woman should be without the Ledger's Pattern Coupon Book. Be among the thousands of women who will get these coupons.

.... CUT THIS OUT AND SEND TO US ....

THE CHICAGO LEDGER, 500 N. Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.

Enclosed please find one dollar for a year's subscription to the Chicago Ledger. This entitles me to Five Pattern Coupons. **Canada Subscription Price $1.50 per year.**

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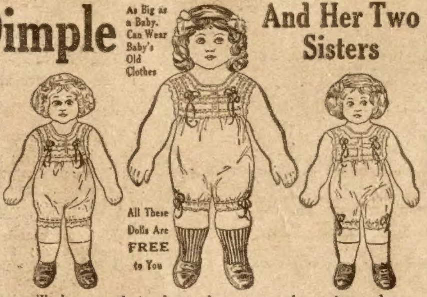
If you wish any pattern from those advertised in this issue, mark the number and size on the margin and we will retain a coupon for each pattern we send you when we send you the Coupon Book. (Order by size and number.) **Coupons good for six months.**

Dolly Dimple And Her Two Sisters

As Big as a Baby. Can Wear Baby's Old Clothes



All These Dolls Are FREE to You

Dolly Dimple is Over Two Feet Tall As Big As a Real Live Baby

Baby clothes will fit her and you can bend her legs and arms without fear of breaking them. Just think, she can sit up in a chair or sleep in baby's own bed. You will be proud to have her as a playmate and you will fall in love with the sisters. All of them are practically unbreakable and will stand hard usage for years. Our offer brings them within the reach of every girl or boy in every home. Mother can fix them up for you in a few minutes' time.

GIVEN FREE for only one subscription to Everyday Life, at 25c a year, and 10c extra, or 35c in all. Send for your dolls today. You'll be delighted.

Send us a new yearly subscription to Everyday Life at 25c and 10c extra for postage, packing, etc., and these three dollies—one big one and two smaller ones—will be sent you.

Tell the neighbors that Everyday Life is a fine illustrated monthly paper with stories and departments of interest to all the family. Send us this subscription, and we will send you the three beautiful dollies **absolutely free. Don't delay.** Please send early because the demand for Dolly Dimple and the two smaller dollies is going to be tremendous. We have already sent out thousands of dollies to our little folks, and they are all delighted.

EVERYDAY LIFE, Doll Dept. 51, Chicago.

15 Xmas, New Year & Holiday Post Cards FREE

if you will send us the subscription at once. Do not put it off, but send today—the minute you see our great offer. We will send you free, as an extra reward for promptness, 15 new and beautiful Xmas, Holiday, New Year, Birthday and other fine Post Cards FREE. These Post Cards are all high grade—some gold embossed—no cheap cards among them, and will surprise and delight you. Send today and get the 15 Post Cards as an extra present.

Issued Weekly *Five Cents a Copy*

The FARMING BUSINESS

The Application of Business Principles to Agriculture.

THE REASON WHY

There must be a good reason for doing the right thing—the reason is because it is the right thing to do. You will say that's a woman's answer; but who can deny that a good woman is quicker at arriving at a correct conclusion than a man? I don't dare to. First, because it would not be true. Second, because it would be dangerous. Third, because a woman thinks faster than a man.

THE FARMING BUSINESS was started because it was the right thing to do. Everybody engaged in, or interested in, farming needed a publication just like this paper to help them make more money out of their business. The farmer is first a manufacturer. He has to get ready, like any other producer, that which he has to offer for sale, then he must sell it.

There are hundreds of papers published trying to teach the farmer how to produce his wares for the market that don't know as much about raising crops, stock, chickens, etc., as their subscribers, who must always adapt themselves to local conditions of soil and climate. But to keep him posted on all questions that will enable him to get more money and a safer market—or help him do better business—is THE REASON WHY this paper was started.

Farming is the biggest business in the world. There are six million heads of families (men and women) in the United States alone engaged in the farming business. They either own or rent farms and live on them or live in town. One out of every five people operating farms in the United States live in villages or towns. Four out of every five farmers in foreign countries live in communities (a number of farm homes together) or in towns. This custom is rapidly increasing in the United States.

Farming is the oldest business in the world. Adam and Eve began it in the year one. From the beginning woman was man's partner in the farming business; even at that early date they engaged in the fruit business; they had an apple orchard about which sacred history relates.

It is said that "all work makes Jack a dull boy," so reading a whole paper on one subject makes work out of gaining information. We print a lot of things in THE FARMING BUSINESS that will not "stick to the text," but which will be related to it—sort of a cousin—so that "Jack" will not become a "dull boy," as it is a serious and tiresome business to study and read hours and hours about how to make money.

THE FARMING BUSINESS has forty pages, printed on good book paper, and you cannot read it in one day. Every member of the family old enough to read will think that the paper is edited especially for them, from the oldest members to the youngest, man or woman, boy or girl, and any family taking only one paper will subscribe for THE FARMING BUSINESS.

As we go to press only about twelve or twenty-four hours before you get your paper, we do something no other paper intended for people interested in farming can do—we print a review of the news! We do not run it like a newspaper, but rewrite the big news and give every event up to date worth reading in about four of the forty pages, without repeat, display or fuss. No banker, merchant, manufacturer or business man or farmer (a farmer is both manufacturer and business man) can succeed unless he first keeps well posted on the big events that keep changing conditions under which we live. Hence, news is a brother to THE FARMING BUSINESS.

Our big, one-page, Colored Map of the countries at war will be a great educator and instructor. Every school should have this paper every week. This map will be redrawn every week, so as to show where the armies and navies are located and their changing positions, and printed in all the colors. No other daily, weekly or monthly paper can or will do this. This map alone is worth more than Five Cents, the price of a single copy of the whole paper from our agent.

This subject is very closely allied with the farming business, as prices depend largely upon foreign demand. Our weekly review of the war gives all the news and conditions, and does not have to repeat, retract and deny previous statements, as is the case with the daily press, hurriedly written and printed every hour.

Another expensive feature is a double page spread, illustrated and printed in all the colors, of NEW INVENTIONS and DISCOVERIES. Special attention is paid to every new thing that will save labor and time. The farmers of today understand machinery and inventions better than men engaged in any other business, and are deeply interested in the same. This department is closely connected with our subject—THE FARMING BUSINESS—as new inventions and discoveries lower costs and increase profits.

THE FARMING BUSINESS' Market Review is of the first importance and is not a dry table of figures read only by a few people. It is of the greatest value to our readers because it DOES REVIEW every angle of everything that affects prices and demand for grains, live stock, produce, etc., in the most readable form within the widest possible range, and brought down to the day before you get the paper. This no purely farm or stock paper can do, as they go to press too long in advance of the mailing date.

In THE FARMING BUSINESS each week there is a department of Fiction, not "trash," but stories of life that are truthful and helpful, as well as interesting. Most of us are in hard, practical work, and it is a well-known fact that to be healthy and happy we must have entertainment and relaxation. Fiction, if it is good—and it will be good in THE FARMING BUSINESS—is food for that side of our nature which demands relaxation. It will be carefully selected stories of love, romance, detective work, adventure by land and sea, as well as stories of common, everyday life. It will be clean and educational, teach a lesson and a moral, and be such mental food as will be welcome in the family and beneficial to those who read.

The editorial pages of THE FARMING BUSINESS, like its News Columns, are related to the main subjects treated in the paper, but the relationship is not always that of a brother. Sometimes they are only cousins to the business of farming. This is necessary to make up a complete family of allied interests all bearing on the habits, successes and failures in the business and social life of every one. Only thoroughly practical men who have specialized in these departments are employed as editors on THE FARMING BUSINESS. Remember that this paper is forty-two years old and ran under another name, and we changed its name and doubled its circulation by changing the matter in it the first issue. The consumer of farm products needs to read this paper. The farmer himself uses a lot of farm products he does not raise. There are twenty million heads of families not living on farms interested in the farming business because they live from day to day from the soil.

The various features to be discussed in this paper are many. We can here describe only a few of them. We will discuss the various financial problems facing the farmer; methods and plans of marketing all farm products; putting the farm on the highest plane of economic production; the handling of all kinds of livestock, with a special department on poultry. There will be a complete home department—foods and cooking; canning and preserving; needlework; fashions, nursing and caring for the sick. There will also be a live and interesting department for the farm boys and girls; no kindergarten stuff, but matter that the old folks will often read with as much interest and benefit as will the boys and girls. The advertising columns of THE FARMING BUSINESS are clean and will be kept clean. The whole editorial policy is one of construction, not destruction.

ASK THE AGENT OF THE LEDGER AND BLADE TO BRING YOU A COPY OF "THE FARMING BUSINESS" IF IT INTERESTS YOU